





Given to Frances Shirley, 1970





FALSTAFF'S LETTERS.









W. Langbehn's Sculp.

*I must dance, caper in the Air  
like a Tun of Molass' only my  
ascension will be heavier in regard  
I must rise without a crane O.  
Master Brook. —*

*Falstaff's Letters.*



ORIGINAL LETTERS, *ETC.*

OF

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF

AND HIS FRIENDS;

BY

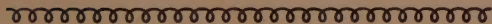
JAMES WHITE.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1796,

AND NOW REPRINTED,

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE

BY CHARLES EDMUND MERRILL, JR.



NEW YORK AND LONDON:

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# INTRODUCTORY

## NOTE.



### I.

Most of what we know of James White we owe to the letters and essays of Charles Lamb, his life-long friend and admirer. Both were born in 1775; both, at the age of seven, entered Christ's Hospital as blue coat boys; and both there fell under the spell of Coleridge, "the inspired charity boy," who had entered the year before, at the age of nine, "with hope like a fiery column before him—the dark pillar not yet turned." Their school days have received immortal commemoration in "Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago" which Lamb contributed to the *London Magazine* in 1820, and which is to be found among the *Essays of Elia*.

White is referred to in Lamb's earliest published letter, addressed to Coleridge, and dated May 27, 1796:

White

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White is on the eve of publishing (he took the idea from *Vortigern*) "Original Letters of Falstaff, Shallow, etc."; a copy you shall have when it comes out. They are without exception the best imitations of Shakespeare I ever saw.

Two years earlier William Henry Ireland, son of Samuel Ireland, the author and engraver, had already commenced the forgery of the deeds signed by or relating to Shakespeare with which he deceived; not only his father, but many of the most accomplished scholars of the time, including Warton and Doctor Parr. There followed manuscripts of King Lear and parts of Hamlet, and the series culminated in the pretended discovery of the manuscripts of two unpublished plays by Shakespeare, *Vortigern and Rowena*, and *Henry II.* *Vortigern* was produced by Sheridan at Drury Lane, with Kemble in the cast, in March, 1796, and failed. "If this be by Shakespeare," said Mrs. Siddons, "he is the unevenest writer that ever lived." The failure of *Vortigern*, and Malone's attack on the authenticity of the Ireland manuscripts resulted in Ireland's admission of his fraud in the *Authentic Account*, afterward expanded into his *Confessions*.

A few

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

A few weeks after the date of the first letter to Coleridge, Lamb writes to him again:

White's "Letters" are near publication. Could you review 'em or get 'em reviewed in the *Critical Review*? His frontispiece is a good conceit: Sir John learning to dance to please Madame Page, in drefs of doublet, etc., from the upper half; and modern pantaloons, with shoes, etc., of the eighteenth century from the lower half; and the whole work full of goodly quips and rare fancies, 'all deftly masqued like hoar antiquity,'—— and much superior to Dr. Kenrick's *Falstaff's Wedding*, which you may have seen.

To what extent, if at all, did Lamb participate in the fabrication of the "Letters"? The "Dictionary of National Biography" says calmly that "the dedication in black letter to 'Master Samuel Irelaunde,' the forger's father, was probably written by Lamb;" Mr. E. V. Lucas, perhaps the best equipped of Lamb's biographers, says "White's name alone is given to it, but that Lamb had a share is beyond question: he could not have sat by inactive during the progress of a joke so near his heart. Indeed, Southey's testimony is that Lamb and White were joint authors,\* in which case the little volume contains the

\* Vide p. 16, infra.

earliest



earliest specimens of Lamb's prose that we possess. My own impression is that the Dedication is wholly Lamb's.\*"

That is as it may be. The idea of dedicating these papers, "which have been in the possession of the Quickly family for near four hundred years," to the father of the forger of the pseudo-Shakesperian documents and plays would have tickled the whimsical fancy of Charles Lamb, who was by no means so invariably "gentle-hearted," as the traditional adjective which so annoyed him would imply.

Perhaps we have better grounds for believing, on internal evidence, that the Preface is from his hand. But I suspect that the attribution of the Preface to Lamb's authorship has as its primary basis the presence there of this rather curious anticipation of the *Dissertation upon Roast Pig*:

At Mrs. Quickly's demise, which happened in August, 1419, they (the manuscript letters) devolved, among other outlandish papers, such as leafes, title-deeds, etc., to her heirefs at law, an elderly maiden sister; who, unfortunately for all the world, and to my individual eternal sorrow and regret, of all the dishes in the culinary system, was fond of roast pig.

\* The Life of Charles Lamb by E. V. Lucas, 2 vols. 8vo. London 1905 Methuen & Co. I, 85.

A curse

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A curfe on her Epicurean guts, that could not be contented with plain mutton, like the reft of her anceftors!

Reader, whenever as journeying onward in thy epiftolary progreff, a chafm fhould occur to interrupt the chain of events, I befeech thee blame not me, but curfe the rump of roaft pig. This maiden-fifter, conceive with what pathos I relate it, abfolutely made ufe of feveral, no doubt invaluable letters, to fhade the jutting protuberances of that animal from difproportionate excoriation in its circuitous approaches to the fire.

Is this the germ of the immortal *Differtation*?

It really feems not unlikely that fuch was the cafe. Who knows but that Lamb was part author of that fame Preface? An interefting problem, indeed, when we reflect that of all Eliana, this Differtation on Roaft Pig is very nearly the moft familiar and dear to us all; and perhaps, *nemo feit quominus*, thofe aftounding revelations on the firft principles of Crackling were in embryo in the author's brain years upon years before they were matured and prefented to the world.\*

Here are two sketches of White at this period, the firft but a glimpse, but a revealing glimpse, from *On Some of the Old Actors*, which Lamb contributed to the *London Magazine* in 1822 and 1823 :

\* Mary and Charles Lamb; Poems, Letters and Remains. By W. Carew Hazlitt, London, 1874, p. 157.

Dodd

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Dodd (James William Dodd, 1740-1796), was a man of reading, and left at his death a choice collection of Old English literature. I should judge him to have been a man of wit. I know one instance of an impromptu which no length of study could have bettered. My merry friend, Jem White, had seen him one evening in Aquecheek, and recognizing Dodd the next day in Fleet Street, was irresistibly impelled to take off his hat and salute him as the identical Knight of the preceding evening with a "Save you, Sir Andrew." Dodd, not at all disconcerted at this unusual address from a stranger with a courteous half-rebuking wave of the hand, put him off with an "Away, Fool!"

The second is the forever delightful picture in *In Praise of Chimney-Sweepers* which Lamb contributed to the *London Magazine* for May 1822, and which later found a place in *Elia*:

My pleasant friend JEM WHITE was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew. Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who relying upon his  
dusky

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duffy suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not foot which looks so), was quitted out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity; but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlors three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savour. JAMES WHITE, as head waiter, had charge of the first table; and myself, with our trusty companion BIGOD, ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clambering and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humors of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honour the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing "the gentleman," and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O, it was a pleasure to see the sable youngers lick in the unctuous meat, with his more unctuous sayings—how  
he

he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors—how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it “must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman’s eating”—how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony,—how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good he should lose their custom; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts—“The King,”—the “Cloth,”—which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering;—and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, “May the Brush supersede the Laurel.” All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a “Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so,” which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking saufages, which pleased them mightily, and was the favourite part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

Golden lads and lasses must,  
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust—

James White is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the  
fun

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fun of the world when he died—of my world, at least. His old clients look for him among the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew and the glory of Smithfield departed for ever.

Writing of Lamb's life in London in 1794-6 Talfourd says:

During these years Lamb's most frequent companion was James White, or Jem White, as he always called him. Lamb always insisted that for hearty joyous humour, tinged with Shakespearian fancy, Jem never had an equal. "Jem White!" said he, to Mr. LeGrice, when they met for the last time, after many years' absence, at the Bell of Edmonton, in June, 1833, "there never was his like! We never shall see such days as those in which Jem flourished!" All that now remains of Jem is the celebration of the suppers which he gave the young chimney-sweepers in the Elia of his friend, and a thin duodecimo volume, which he published in 1796, under the title of the "Letters of Sir John Falstaff, with a dedication (printed in black letter) to Master Samuel Irelaunde," which those who knew Lamb at the time believed to be his . . . . The work was neglected, although Lamb exerted all the influence he subsequently acquired with more popular writers to obtain for it favourable notices, as will be seen from various passages in his letters. He stuck, however, gallantly by his favourite protegee; and even when he could little afford to disburse sixpence, he made a point of buying a copy of the book whenever he discovered one amidst the refuse of a book-seller's stall, and would present it to a friend in the hope of making a convert. He gave me one  
of

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

of these copies soon after I became acquainted with him, stating that he had purchased it in the morning for sixpence, and assuring me I should enjoy a rare treat in the perusal; but if I must confess the truth, the mask of quaintness was so closely worn, that it nearly concealed the humour. To Lamb it was, doubtless, vivified by the eye and voice of his old boon companion, forming to him an undying commentary; without which it was comparatively spiritless. Alas! how many even of his own most delicate fancies, rich as they are in feeling and in wisdom, will be lost to those who have not present to them the sweet broken accents, and the half playful, half melancholy smile of the writer\*.

The next mention of White in Lamb's correspondence is in the memorable letter to Coleridge reporting the tragedy which was to be the determining factor in Lamb's life, from his dedication of himself to the care of his "poor, dear, dearest sister" until his death. Familiar as it is, it may find a place here:

September 27, 1796.

My dearest Friend—

White, or some of my friends, or the public papers, by this time may have informed you of the terrible calamities that have fallen on our family. I will only give you the outlines:—My poor, dear, dearest sister, in a fit

\* The Works of Charles Lamb. In Four volumes. A new edition (Edited by Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd) London, 1855. Edward Moxon, Vol. 1, pp. 13, 14.

of



OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

of insanity, has been the death of her own mother. I was at hand only time enough to snatch the knife out of her grasp. She is at present in a madhouse, from whence I fear she must be moved to an hospital. God has preserved to me my senses; I eat, and drink, and sleep, and have my judgment, I believe, very sound. My poor father was slightly wounded, and I am left to take care of him and my aunt. Mr. Norris, of the Bluecoat School, has been very very kind to us, and we have no other friend; but, thank God, I am very calm and composed, and able to do the best that remains to do. Write as religious a letter as possible, but no mention of what is gone and done with. With me "the former things are passed away," and I have something more to do than to feel.

God Almighty have us all in His keeping!

C. LAMB.

Mention nothing of poetry. I have destroyed every vestige of past vanities of that kind. Do as you please, but if you publish, publish mine (I give free leave) without name or initial, and never send me a book, I charge you.

Your own judgment will convince you not to take any notice of this yet to your dear wife. You look after your family; I have my reason and strength left to take care of mine. I charge you, don't think of coming to see me. Write. I will not see you if you come. God Almighty love you and all of us!

C. LAMB.

In 1798 White was living with Charles Lloyd, who shared with Coleridge Lamb's oldest

oldest and deepest affection. Of the fellow-lodgers Southey wrote to Edward Moxon after Lamb's death:

His most familiar friend, when I first saw him, was White, who held some office at Christ's Hospital, and continued intimate with him as long as he lived . . . He and Lamb were joint authors of the *Original Letters of Falstaff*. . . . Lamb, Lloyd, and White were inseparable in 1798; the two latter at one time lodged together, though no two men could be imagined more unlike each other. Lloyd had no drollery in his nature; White seemed to have nothing else. You will easily understand how Lamb could sympathise with both.\*

It was while White and Lloyd† were fellow-lodgers that Lamb wrote to Coleridge (January 28, 1798):

I had well-nigh quarrelled with Charles Lloyd; and for no other reason, I believe, than that the good creature did all he could to make me happy. The truth is, I thought he tried to force my mind from its natural and proper bent. He continually wished me to be from home; he was drawing me from the consideration of my

\* *Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*, London 1850. Vol. VI, pp. 286-287.

† It is to Lloyd that the fifth stanza of *The Old Familiar Faces*, written about this time, refers:

"I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man.  
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly,  
Left him to muse on the old familiar faces."

poor

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poor dear Mary's situation, rather than assisting me to gain a proper view of it with religious consolations. I wanted to be left to the tendency of my own mind, in a solitary state, which, in times past, I knew had led to quietness and a patient bearing of the yoke. He was hurt that I was not more constantly with him; but he was living with White, a man to whom I had never been accustomed to impart my dearest feelings, tho' from long habits of friendliness, and many a social and good quality. I loved him very much. I met company there sometimes—indiscriminate company. Any society almost, when I am in affliction, is sorely painful to me. I seem to breathe more freely, to think more collectedly, to feel more properly and calmly, when alone. All these things the good creature did with the kindest intentions in the world, but they produced in me nothing but forebodings and discontent. I became, as he complained, "jaundiced" towards him. . . . but he has forgiven me; and his smile, I hope, will draw all such humours from me.

To Manning on March 1, 1800, Lamb writes:

I hope by this time you are prepared to say the "Falstaff's Letters" are a bundle of the sharpest, queerest, profoundest humours of any these juice-drained latter times have spawned. I should have advertised you that the meaning is frequently hard to be got at; and so are the future guineas that now lie ripening and aurifying in the womb of some undiscovered Potosi; but dig, dig, Manning!

Ten

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Ten weeks later he tells the same friend:

Our servant is dead, and my sister is ill—so ill as to make a removal to a place of confinement absolutely necessary. I have been left *alone* in a house where but ten days since living beings were, and noises of life were heard. I have made the experiment and find I cannot bear it any longer. Last night I went to sleep at White's, with whom I am to be until I can find a settlement.

Eight years elapse before White reappears in the *Letters*. Writing again to Manning, February 26, 1808, Lamb says:

White is at Christ's Hospital, a wit of the first magnitude, but would rather be thought a gentleman, like Congreve. You know Congreve's repulse which he gave to Voltaire, when he came to visit him as a *literary man*, that he wished to be considered only in the light of a private gentleman. I think the impertinent Frenchman was properly answered. I should just serve any member of the French Institute in the same manner, that wished to be introduced to me.

White died in London at his house in Burton Crescent on March 13, 1820, leaving this dull world, as Hazlitt said of him in his essay "On the Conversation of Authors," "to go in search of more kindred spirits, 'turning like the latter end of a lover's lute.' "

The

The title-page of the first issue (1796) of the first edition of "Falstaff's Letters" is reproduced in the present volume. There is a copy in the British Museum and one in the Duyckinck Collection in the New York Public Library. A year later the unsold remainder of the first issue was put out with a new title-page, as follows:

Original Letters, etc. / of / Sir John Falstaff / Selected from / Genuine MSS. / which have been in the possession of / Dame Quickly / and / her descendents / near four hundred years.—The Second Edition. / Dedicated to / Master Samuel Irelaunde. / London / Published by, etc. / 1797.

An edition of "Falstaff's Letters" was published in Philadelphia by R. Desilver in 1813. It follows closely the original edition. There is a copy in the Duyckinck Collection in the New York Public Library.

A third edition, "reprinted verbatim et literatim" was published by B. Robson, 43 Cranbourn Street, Leicester Square, in 1877. To this edition were prefixed "notices of the author collected from Charles Lamb, Leigh Hunt, and other contemporaries."

Another reprint appeared in 1904 in "The King's

King's Classics," a series issued under the general editorship of Professor Gollancz; this reprint contains an introduction by an anonymous hand based on that prefixed to the 1877 edition.

The earliest discovered notice of the book appeared in the *Monthly Review* for November, 1796. The anonymous reviewer writes:

It was not to be expected that the late extraordinary attempt to work on the national credulity by the pretended Shakespearian reliques should pass without the gibes of the witty, as well as the sober animadversions of the grave and learned. . . . The writer before us has taken occasion, from this memorable experiment, to amuse himself and his readers with a supposed collection of Letters between Falstaff and the personages connected with him in the plays of Shakespeare; in which he has shown considerable talents for humour, with a good deal of ingenuity in imitating the language and manners of characters sketched out by our great dramatist. Not that it would be difficult frequently to catch him tripping in an expression, or a circumstance, not belonging to the assumed period; but where the purpose is only a laugh, there is no need for criticism to look so narrowly. . . . The fustian of antient Pistol, the gossiping of Shallow and his man Davy, the pedantry of the Welch parson, the simplicity of Slender, are all personated in various letters with success; and several humorous incidents are imagined, suitable to the times and characters.

Perhaps

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Perhaps as a result of Lamb's\* request of Coleridge, and conceivably by Coleridge's own hand, the following review appeared in the *Critical Review* for June, 1797:

The humorous characters of Shakespeare have seldom been successfully imitated. Dr. Kenrick wrote a play called *Falstaff's Wedding*, in which he introduced the merry knight and his companions; but the peculiar quaintness of the character was lost by being sunk in modern wit. The author of the little work before us has, we think, been somewhat more successful, and must have given his days and nights to the study of the language of Falstaff, Dame Quickly, Slender, etc. His object, indeed, seems to be to ridicule the late gross imposture of Norfolk-street; and certain it is that had these letters been introduced into the world, prepared in the manner of the Ireland Mss., the internal evidence would have spoken more loudly in their favour. But in whatever esteem they may be held as imitations, they argue no small portion of humour in the writer, who, we understand, is a young man, and this his first attempt.

Lamb's interest in the book ("a partiality" says Mr. Lucas, "which I think was not unassociated with paternal sentiment") was inexhaustible. In September, 1819, six months before White's death, he contributed to Leigh Hunt's *Examiner*, an article on Falstaff's letters:

\* Vide p. 7, *Supra*.

A copy



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A copy of this work sold at the Roxburgh sale for five guineas. We have both before and since that time picked it up at stalls for eighteen pence. Reader, if you shall ever light upon a copy in the same way, we counsel you buy it. We are deceived if there be not in it much of the true Shakespearian stuff. We present you with a few of the Letters, which may speak for themselves. (He then quotes from the first, third, and fourth of Falstaff's Letters to Prince Henry. Cf. pp. 1, 9, and 19, *infra*.) "How say you, reader, do not these inventions smack of Eastcheap? Are they not nimble, forgetive, evasive? Is not the humour of them elaborate, cogitabund, fanciful? Carry they not the true image and superscription of the father which begot them? Are they not steeped all over in character—subtle, profound, unctuous? Is not here the very effigies of the Knight? Could a counterfeit Jack Falstaff come by these conceits? Or are you, reader, one who delights to drench his mirth in tears? You are, or, peradventure, have been a lover; a 'dismissed bachelor,' perchance, one that is 'lafs-lorn.' Come, then, and weep over the dying bed of such a one as thyself. Weep with us the death of poor Abraham Slender." (He next quotes the letter from Davy to Shallow. Cf. p. 115 *infra*.) "Should these specimens fail to rouse your curiosity to see the whole, it may be to your loss, gentle reader; but it will give small pain to the spirit of him that wrote this little book, my fine-tempered friend, J. W.—for not in authorship or the spirit of authorship, but from the fulness of a young soul, newly kindling at the Shakespearian flame, and bursting to be delivered of a rich exuberance of conceits—I had almost said *kindred with those of the full Shakespearian*

*genius*

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*genius itself*—were these letters dictated. We remember when the inspiration came upon him, when the plays of Henry IV were first put into his hands. We think at our recommendation he read them, rather late in life, though still he was but a youth. He may have forgotten, but we cannot, the pleasant evenings which ensued at the Boar's Head (as we called our tavern, though in reality the sign was not that nor the street Eastcheap,—for that honoured place of resort has long since passed away), when over our bottle of sherris he would talk you nothing but pure *Falstaff* the long evenings through. Like his, the wit of J. W. was deep, recondite, imaginative, full of goodly figures or fancies. Those evenings have long since passed away, and nothing comparable to them has come in their stead, or can come. We have heard the chimes at midnight.

Leigh Hunt reprinted this paper in *The Indicator*, on January 24, 1821, with the following introduction:

Agreeably to our plan of noticing such works as either demand a particular kind of introduction to the public, or do not appear to be appreciated as they deserve, we repeat a criticism written by a friend on the above Letters. Not long after it appeared in the *Examiner*, the author who was its subject died. His name was James White; and many who knew nothing of him as a writer, will recollect being familiar with his name in the unromantic title of an agent for newspapers. Not the least, indeed, of his Shakespearian qualities, was an indifference to fame. He was also, like his great inspirer, a gentleman. He was one among the many living  
writers

writers who passed their boyhood in Christ's Hospital, where he held an office sometime after quitting it. We remember, as he passed through the cloisters, how we used to admire his handsome appearance and unimprovable manner of wearing his new clothes.

On September 28, 1832, Henry Crabb Robinson took Walter Savage Landor to Enfield to see Charles Lamb. Our last quotation is from Robinson's *Diary*:

Landor breakfasted with me and also Worsley, who came to supply Hare's place. . . . After an agreeable chat, we drove down to Edmonton, and walked over the fields to Enfield, where Charles Lamb and his sister were ready dressed to receive us. We had scarcely an hour to chat with them; but it was enough to make Landor and Worsley express themselves afterwards delighted with the person of Mary Lamb; and pleased with the conversation of Lamb, though I thought L. by no means at his ease. Miss Lamb quite silent. Nothing in the conversation recollectable. Lamb gave Landor White's *Falstaff's Letters*.

More than thirty-five years lie between Lamb's first attempt to win a hearing for Jem White's little book and that day at Enfield twelve years after White's death, when, at his first meeting with him, "Lamb gave Landor White's *Falstaff's Letters*." In the years between, as we know, he had bought and given to some friend every copy that he had turned

up

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up on the stalls of the book-sellers. It is pleasant to think how glad he would be if he could know that now, one hundred and thirty years after its first publication, his "merry friend's" book has just "gone into a new edition."

—And Oh! how he would help its sale!

C. E. M. JR.





Original Letters, &c.  
OF  
SIR JOHN FALSTAFF  
AND  
HIS FRIENDS;  
NOW FIRST MADE PUBLIC BY A GENTLEMAN,  
A DESCENDANT OF  
DAME QUICKLY,  
FROM  
GENUINE MANUSCRIPTS  
WHICH HAVE BEEN IN THE POSSESSION  
OF THE  
QUICKLY FAMILY  
NEAR FOUR HUNDRED YEARS.

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LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR;  
AND PUBLISHED BY  
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J. DEBRETT, PICCADILLY; AND MURRAY AND  
HIGHLEY, NO. 32, FLEET-STREET.  
1796.





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## DEDICATIONE,

To

MASTER SAMUEL IRELAUNDE

RIGHT CURTEIS AND ERUDITE SYRRE,

KNOWEN unto you it is whatte maner of menne there be in thys age, who deeme they doe mankynde mochel servyce, whan in theyre leud forte they make mocke at trew scyence, whych consysteth for the most parte, it sholde seeme, in the notices we have lefte us of antiquitie. These be menne, who thinke scorne of payns-taking Wights (like you or me) who from the mynes of remote tyme by dynte of toyle do brynge forth to view the pretious golde and the sylvere, (wherein it may not be farre from our discourse to remarke after whatte fashyone the mynes I here discusse doe differ

*differ from mynes physic or natural. In as moche as these latter doe renderre uppethyre treasures yette being rude, and (as menne comonly saien) in the oarre; whereas those mynes intellectuall, abounden in a sorte of metal, whyche cometh forth onmyngled wythe baser matter, and bearynge engraven onne it the marke and impresse, whyche to menne skylful in soche thynges, and candide, dothe notifie and assure its authenticitie. Peradventure, neede is I sholde here fetche instaunce from thatte trew myne and ryche vein of poesye dugge out in these last days by that younge Bristowyan, and whyche to all sound myndes dyd evidence a genuine byrthe. (Tho' there be, who stycke notte to affyrme that the antique Rowley was noe oderthanne the stryplinge Chatterton, therein erring.) Bote thys is a mayne digressyone from the matter in honde, tho' therein I stande notte alone, having notable exemplar in thatte famose Wight of Antiquitie, the Latine poet Uergilius (as Dan Chaucer*  
*'clepeth*

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

'clepeth him aryghte, whom the mincinge  
mouthe of after tymes mys-nameth Virgil.)  
Alsoe if neede were, I might here cite the  
exemplar of thatte grete Clerke himselfe,  
of whom his pupil Spenser wele affyrmeth  
thatte he is a "Well of Englyshe ondefyled."  
After thys fashyone he speaketh. And now  
letten us come forthwithe to the main sub-  
jecte of our discourse.

Those rare gyftes of Fortuna to menne,  
the lyghtynge upon lost recordes, and the in-  
ventyone\* of MS. have in thys oure daye  
been farre outdonne by thatte rare discoverie  
by yourselfe made. Tell me, curteis Syrre,  
was it by spade and by mattocke thatte you  
dyd fynde these goodlye thynges? Were those  
shrewde knaves caterers for you, who dyd  
fathome a grave for Mistresse Ophelia?  
Those madde rogues who dyd poke agaynste  
the scull of a droll Jesterre, thereby afford-  
ynge moche matter of mathematycale fonne  
for Master Laurence Sterne? Methinks you

\* Inventoryone, or discoverie, from the Latine verbe, invenio.

doe

doe call to life agayne thatte swote swanne  
 of Avonne, whose Songes dyd sounde so  
 pleasaunt in the eares of thatte peerlesse  
 Mayden Quene and renowned victrix of  
 Spayne, Elizabeth. Bote by the pryce sette  
 upon your labours by the wyttes of the age, it  
 sholde seeme lamentable matter of facte,  
 howe moche poesie, and the pryme phansies  
 and conceipts of connyng menne are fallen  
 into contempte in these the worldis last dayes.  
 Natheles, Master Irelaunde, letten us not  
 be fruiteleslye caste downe—The tyme dothe  
 faste approche, nay even now is close at  
 honde, when the overcharged cloudes of  
 scepticyisme muste incontinentlye vanish be-  
 fore convictione's serener Welkin, and Ed-  
 monde shall in vayne resume hys laboures.  
 Arreste thine eyne—looke backe atte the  
 goodlye figure of the auntient Knighte—  
 naye, looke notte cursorye, it is the impresse  
 of a ryghte venerable picture traunsmitted  
 downewardes throughe oure house forre  
 foure hondredde yeares.—Seest thou notte  
 the

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

*the antique charaēteres ygraved onne the Belte? Doubtlesse they doe reflecte a lighte collaterale uponne thy clerkish manuscriptes; ande doubtlesse by a twofolde operatyone doe they confyrme unto the worlde by theyre evidence the truth of the Falstaffe Letteres. To conclude; the matter of faēte (as soe it sholde seeme) muste be pleasaunt and gratefull untoe thee, Master Irelaunde, to know thatte in the dayes of the Fifth Henry an ancestor of thyne was a maker of Trunke Hose, or as it is spoken of in these moderne tymes, a maker of Pantaloones.*

*Trustyng thatte posteritie shall yet remunerate us for oure undertakynge (whych are simylare) wythe a lyke portyone of laud and prayse, I doe commende thee unto thye beste fortunes.*

*Thy fellow-labourer in the mynes  
of antiquitie, and moste humble  
servante to commande,*

\*\*\*\*\*.



## P R E F A C E .

OF all the valuable remains of Antiquity, the world has ever especially patronised those, which any ways tend to develope the characters of men eminent in their day.—The Curate's Sermons we can subscribe to from motives of humanity to his Widow; not to hint at their utility, administered occasionally, as narcotics. A similar impulse, perhaps a fellow-feeling, endears us to the Author, whose taylor is importunate.—But the familiar papers, and epistolary tablets, of a man renown'd among his cotemporaries, famous through succeeding centuries, happy be his dole, who shall rescue from the Epicurean tooth of Vandal Moth accurs'd!—The Antiquarian shall ever present him the  
right

right hand of fellowship; nor less esteem the yellow colourings, laid on their nibbled surface by the kindly hand of time, than the mellow hues, with which the same friendly touch hath perfected some undoubted work of Guido, or the Caracci.

I am happy in presenting the world with a series of most interesting manuscript letters, &c.—They were found by Mrs. Quickly, Landlady of the Boar Tavern in Eastcheap, in a private drawer, at the left hand corner of a walnut-tree escrutoire, the property of Sir John Falstaff, after the good Knight's death. —At Mrs. Quickly's demise, which happened in August, 1419, they devolved, among other Outlandish papers, such as leases, title-deeds, &c. to her heirs at law, an elderly maiden sister; who, unfortunately



unfortunately for all the world, and to my individual eternal sorrow and regret, of all the dishes in the culinary system, was fond of roast pig.

A curse on her Epicurean guts, that could not be contented with plain mutton, like the rest of her Ancestors!

Reader, whenever as journeying onward in thy epistolary progress, a chasm should occur to interrupt the chain of events, I beseech thee blame not me, but curse the rump of roast pig. This maiden-sister, conceive with what pathos I relate it, absolutely made use of several, no doubt invaluable letters, to shade the jutting protuberances of that animal from disproportionate excoriation in its circuitous approaches to the fire.

My friend, Mr. \*\*\*\*\*, decypherer of  
ancient

ancient records, on shewing him the manuscripts, and communicating my misfortune, slyly hinted at his possession of some curious yellow papers.—However gratified I might feel at this instance of his friendship, however practicable I might conceive it to forge the mere manual characters, how are the escapes, the bursts of humour, of Sir John Falstaff to be delineated, his quips, and his gybes? No, Sirs, I might as well attempt, (with every respect to Alchemists, Amalgamators, &c.—Gentlemen, I bow to you) I might as well attempt to incorporate Solar-essence with Epping-butter.

It may be objected against the authenticity of my Manuscripts, that they do not appear in the proper garb of their age.—To this I answer, that I do not  
make

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

make them public for the gratification of the Virtuoso, but for the amusement of the whole world; three-fourths of whom are too far advanced in life, to commence their studies in the most noble science of antient orthography. Far be it from me to shrink from the investigation of the scholar, or the critic. Gentlemen, my closet is open to you—I very respectfully entreat your entrance. From your convictions I anticipate, I already hear, the united commands of the whole world vibrate in my ear, to bring forward other Manuscripts in my possession; Manuscripts, which contain many very important traits, and features of character, in Sir John Falstaff, but lightly touched upon by Shakspeare.—What an immense acquisition to the Theatres!

I had

I had once, indeed, thought of giving them a dramatic form, for the purpose of communicating them to the Manager of Covent-garden; but the splendid taste of the age, incessantly calling on him for gaudes and shews, the very nature of which must necessarily arrest his whole attention, I fear'd they might be laid on the shelf, "that Bourn whence no Traveller returns;" and thus, with other valuable writings, be lost to the world. Super-added to this, a species of delicacy I cannot describe, 'tis nearly allied to pride, forbad my parting with them unsolicited. Perhaps a respectful application from the manager, Mr. Harris, through the medium of Mr. F\*\*\*\*\*, or any other distinguished performer, might conduce——But really this is so delicate a subject, that—

It

It may be asked, how they came into my possession?—I beseech thee, good Mr. Inquisitive, urge not the question.—Of all the occupations subservient to the views of man, none was ever to me so vituperative, as that of a Publican.—What the Street-walker is in the flesh, that is the Publican in the spirit, amenable to the caprice of every unbridled passion.—And yet, that I should have emigrated from the loins of a Publican, be bred, no, not *bred*, born and begotten of a Publican! Whence can the fatality arise!

Reader, the Manuscript came to me by direct inheritance.

Master Quickly, Master Quickly, amid thy daily roar of subaltern base-born\* revelry, thou art little conscious

\*The Boar's-head in Eastcheap, now a common pot-house.

of

of the illustrious personages that once honoured thy roof;—of the memorials that yet remain of their being to an estranged branch of thy race. The names of *Falstaff*, *Hal*, *Corporal Bardolph*, are strange to thee.—I do not marvel: for they have ceased, Master Quickly, to be on thy score.—Yet if thy blood is not utterly degenerate, if any particle remains to thee of the dignity of our house, put thy pipe into thy mouth, and walk sedately with me.

A sage writer remarks, tho' time obliterated, yet not relentless in his ravages, he leaveth some slight traditionary token to sooth the memory of past times.

Shut the door.—Thou art now, where Sir John was wont to solace himself, in the identical Pomegranate.\*

\*A Room so called in the Boar Tavern, which Sir John was partial to.

Doth

Doth not the Genius of the place filently rebuke thy pride, that hath taken a flight so far beneath thy ancestry?

The Boar's-head, in days of yore the resort of every quality proper and handsome, to become a rendezvous for the many-specied scions of the mechanick-stock! The Pomegranate, ancient receptacle of illustrious Wits, Bloods, who "Daff'd the world aside, and bid it "pass," to be choak'd with the seeds of every baser plant! It is not well—By the fat Friar's scalp of merry Sherwood, it is not well.

Thy grandam, Master Quickly, was a Wight, in whom the culinary attainments of man delighted to reside. She mingled nectareous sack—Thou art more—Thou art a pious householder.—In the twelfth hour of the night, when  
thy

thy cattle, and the stranger, and the afs, and all that is within thy gate, are afsembled to offer up their orifons, call thou aloud upon the indignant manes of the departed Knight—confefs thy degeneracy—promise purgation of his polluted haunts, and if fo his fhade will be pacified, that the merry Sackbut fhall fupercede the clanking of pewter, throughout the Boar.—At fuch an hour, if there be any convexity in thy roofs, expect thou a folemn anfwer.

I have yet a point to fettle, and then I leave thee to the buftle of thy domiciliary regeneration.—Thou haft mifused me damnably, Mafter Quickly.—Not Zeno with all his Stoics about him — not Job with all his oxen about him, would bear my wrongs patiently. Had I blafted the Boar's good name, had I libidi-



libidinously approach'd mine hostess, and wound a recheat on thy brow, thou hadst some shadow of reason; but to maltreat a kind, philanthropick, well-disposed Gentleman, disinterestedly coming forward for the amusement of the whole world, all his own concerns stagnant! oh! 'tis very foul and unman-nered.—I desire thou wilt go to Mr. Robinson's, and take six copies of this my publication, paying the full price for each, individually.

Thou seest, I am incontinently prone to lenity, even to the very detriment of my fortunes.—Canst thou imagine, that any other writer of my merits, elaborate, cogitabund, fanciful in the garnishment of a quaint conceit, and reeking with my disappointments, would be pacified with so trivial a concession?

cession? I look'd to have seen a smug proper Gentleman step from his chair in the Pomegranate, and vote each member a set of the Knight's adventures.—I look'd I should have received ten pounds; and, by the Martyrdom of holy Polycarp, thou hast no more Club, than is compounded of labouring smiths, circumcis'd Anglo-Hebrews, and revolted apprentices; such a farrago of unhous'd Arabs, as Lazarus himself would have scorn'd confortance with.—Oh! thou hast much misus'd me——a'God's name, let the stable be cleansed—to work with Herculean brawn! To work! to work! to work!

There is a certain description of writers, whose great volubility of genius cannot stop calmly and soberly to look behind ever and anon, and gather up the errors

errors and absurdities of a warm imagination.—No—'tis too mechanical for your picked man of genius.—He blindly pushes forward for the goal, nor ever even steps aside, unless indeed, Atalanta-like, to catch at a Golden Apple. Cervantes seems to have been of this class; or he would certainly have never thought of mounting Dapple on Panza, (I beg Sancho's pardon, I mean Panza on Dapple,) when the rogue Gynes was at the same time bestride him a dozen miles distant.

I thank Nature (I think it a blessing) for having cast me in a more phlegmatic mould.—Reader, the Preface is but short—look back—If thou hast caught me tripping, if I am in ought accountable to thee, I promise to explain or rectify in my next edition.



ORIGINAL *LETTERS*, *ETC.*  
OF  
SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.



## ORIGINAL LETTERS.



\*FALSTAFF TO PRINCE HENRY.

HERE, young Gentlemen, go you to the Prince. Robert Shallow, esq; hath sent thee a haunch of Gloucestershire venison, Hal; with a good commodity of pippins, carraways, commendations, and remembrances. Ha! ha! ha! I tell thee what, Hal, thou art most damnable down in the withers; thou art, as it were, a Prince without weight.—An I don't plump thee out like a Christmas turkey, then am I a rogue.

Oh! I am fitting in a nest of the most unfledgd Cuckows that ever brooded under the wing of Hawk. Thou must know, Hal, I had note of a good hale Recruit or two in this neighbourhood. In other shape came I not; look to it, Master Shallow, that in other shape

\* The correspondence appears to have commenced while Sir John stopped at Shallow's seat in Gloucestershire to pick up recruits in his way to York.—Vide the second part of King Henry the Fourth—3d Act.

I depart

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

I depart not.—But I know thou art ever all desire to be admitted a Fellow-Commoner in a jest. Robert Shallow, esq; judgeth the hamlet of COTSWOLD. Doth not the name of Judge horribly chill thee?

With Aaron's rod in his hand, he hath the white beard of Moses on his chin. In good-footh his perpetual countenance is not unlike what thou wouldst conceit of the momentary one of the lunatic Jew, when he tumbled God's Tables from the Mount.

He hath a quick bufy gait, and a huge Soldier-like beaver, furmounted with a Cockade. The valorous Justice, at the head of some dozen or two Domesticals and others, once apprehended a brace of deserters; and ever since doth he assume this badge—Ha! ha! ha!

More of this upright Judge (perpendicular as a Pikeman's weapon, Hal,) anon.

I would dispatch with these Bardolph; but the knave's Hands—(I cry thee mercy) his *Mouth* is full, in preventing desertion among my Recruits. An every Liver among them  
han't



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han't stood me in 3 and 40 shilling, then am I a naughty Escheator.—I tell thee what, Hal, I'd fight against my conscience for never a prince in Christendom but thee.—Oh! this is a most damnable cause, and the rogues know it—they'll drink nothing but sack of three and two-pence a gallon, and I enlist me none but tall puissant\* Fellows that would quaff me up Fleet-ditch, were it filled with sack—pick'd men, Hal—such as will shake my lord of York's mitre. I pray thee, sweet Lad, make speed—thou shalt see glorious deeds!

JOHN FALSTAFF.



FALSTAFF TO THE PRINCE.

HA! ha! ha! support me, Hal! support me! —An I don't quake more than when the lunatick sheriff would ha' carted me for Newgate, there's nought goodly in a cup of sack. —Oh! I am damnably provided here—Let me pawn as many points in my wind, as dame

\* It is needless to observe, that Mouldy, Bullcalf, Wart, Feeble, and Shadow, must have formed the able recruits sir John here alludes to.

Prodigal's

Prodigal's whelp Necessity hath impress'd of my chattels for centinel-service in Mistress Urfula's shop, and never a stitch on 'em would that Bardolph redeem. I might overwhelm myself, and rot on the ground.—An there was not a little smack of kind-heartedness in sugar-candy, God help old Jack! he might lie in the glebe for brawn-feed.—Here is master Robert Shallow, with his rod of justice hath done what Sir Colevile, or the Scotchman Douglas, aye, or young Harry himself, would have given his ears to atchieve—he hath put me down, Hal. I would to God Cotswold were in Spain, for there the gentlemen do never laugh—By the Lord, this uncomb'd hemp-stalk doth breed more convulsive propensities in man, than is in a whole fry of stricken Finfmen\*; and yet is it all unwittingly;—though his countenance be as sharp as the tweak of a bully, his wit is as benumbing too. Here hath been a whoreson murderer brought before him; the Elder would enforce my assistance—ha! ha! ha!—mine, Hal! who was never seated

\* Sir John's conceit is here rather obscure.—I submit, but with great deference, whether he does not allude to the sensitive nature of the Torpedo, which is immediately convulsed on being touched.

on

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

on bench, except indeed at mine hostess's, in the way of unbuttoning to my vespers after dinner;——and I would to God every geminy of Nuns in his Majesty's dominions had my dispossession of the frail creature in their worship—they'd not want for miracle-working I can assure 'em.—Well, Hal, when I look'd the rogue should be committed for trial, lo! Robert commanded he should be immediately hung up by the gills! 'Twas not that Robert was unjust or cruel—no.—Robert quak'd at the ferocious furrows on the rogue's brow.—There was a jail at hand;—the rogue was gyv'd—and yet Robert quak'd—ha! ha! ha! Master Silence the Law-giver too favoured shrewdly of dismay—he thought the man might in conscience be hung—Davy might help his good Coz.—he'd take it upon his word Cotswold records had it in point—ha! ha! ha! Thou knowest, Hal, it was not for me to crop the green ears of a goodly joke-harvest—I am no April scythesman—with the alacrity of a shrewd leaser, I gathered up the errant Gybelings of my brow, and commended their Worships' quick administration of justice.—An if the knave had swung, what the goodger!—'Stead of county yeomen on a base bench,

bench, he had his jury of kites and daws to fit on him, under the sweet canopy of the skies.—But Davy, Davy, Davy, dole'd him a longer life.—This many-specied subaltern of master Shallow's, being advised of the matter, quickly halted in under the yoke of a villainous tub of Jew's-bane, a pannier of newly-stucken hog's-blood, or I'm the impotentest varlet that ever tilted at lip.—Wouldst thou believe it, Hal? Barabbas was instantly commanded to prison—Davy, and his crimson fry, to Shallow were of more import than the charest Bona-roba in all Eastcheap to thee, thou naughty hip-o'-the-hawthorn lover.—Oh! thou would'st have distill'd most damnably, to hear the shrill judge and his man, like Judas and the High-priest, pass busy question and answer upon the price of blood! —Davy had transported the reeking mafs to Robin Pluck's coiner of puddings—Robin admitted the complexion of the commodity—'twas excellent—but Robin thought half a noble a long shot—ha! ha! ha! Master Pluck, let me counsel thee—An the wrath of Robert Shallow esq; be not a commodity of July weather, master Pluck, look to thyself—thou wilt be most damnably amerc'd, master Pluck,

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

Pluck, thou wilt be as bare as a drawn goose, an thou dost not smooth thy ruffled feathers, and compound, master Pluck, thou wilt be doubly amerc'd—Robert Shallow, esquire, hath said it—ha! ha! ha!

I pray God, Bardolph be not whipt for a whoreson knave—He hath dispatched a coop of trodden pullet for Eastcheap—rare living, Hal! rare sperm for Sherris! but the rogue hath not advised master Shallow of their march, and Robert hath a most damnable yearning bowel toward his company.—We must be chary of their blood, Hal—Do not thou lead them into action ere I do come.—A plague upon all hurry, say I.—An it had not been for the overweening Hotbloods at York, who did madly join battle ere valour could arrive to shew itself, I should have been made a Duke, and now must I tarry till thou art King. Well, I shall look to be accoutred forth to my dignities, I can assure thee—Some bright emblem to outshine Courtierhood—a pretty flight model of dame Venus in her evening orbit, or the puissant Mars in the instant of tilting.—No little mad-cap shooting star to twinkle in my portly firmament!

Here

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

Here is mistress Quickly, mine hostess, doth indite to me for monies.—I am not a walking exchequer—She cannot draw upon my ribs. I would, my sweet Hal, thou'dst send her to one Harry Monmouth, a sprightly mad wag of some six foot high, who doth much resort unto the Boar tavern.—He is much my debtor.

JOHN FALSTAFF.



FALSTAFF TO THE PRINCE.

I PR'YTHEE, Hal, lend me thy 'kerchief.—An thy unkindness ha'nt started more salt gouts down my poor old cheek, than my good rapier hath of blood from foemen's gashes in 5 and 30 years' service, then am I a very senseless mummy.

I squander away in drinkings monies belonging to the soldiery! I do deny it—they have had part—the surplus is gone in charity—accuse the parish-officers—make them restore—the whoreson wardens do now put on the cloaca of supplication at the church doors, intercepting gentlemen for charity, forsooth!—'Tis a robbery, a villainous robbery! to  
come

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

come upon a gentleman reeking with piety, God's book in his hand, brimfull of the sacrament! Thou knowest, Hal, as I am but man, I dare in some sort leer at the plate and pass, but as I have the body and blood of Christ within me, could I do it? An I did not make an oblation of a matter of ten pound after the battle of Shrewsbury, in humble gratitude for thy safety, Hal, then am I the veriest transgressor denounced in God's code.—But I'll see them damn'd ere I'll be charitable again. Let 'em coin the plate—let them coin the holy chalice.

To say that I have not naturalised master Silence, that I stand not on the debtor side of accounts with him, would be horribly forgetful and incorrect—to say that he shall see my coinage in the way of honourable reimbursement, gentleman-like repayment, would favour much of honesty, 'tis true, but more (I confess it, I confess it, Hal) of leasing.

To say that I feel not a kind of tendré for master Robert Shallow, while he hath sack, beeves, with emanating bowels towards old sir John, would bespeak me the Infidel, the Jew

Jew—but to confess (saving a certain respect due to the asseveration of my sweet Hal) that I love the man Shallow, or the man Silence, in other shape or degree than as the leech loveth the temple, much less that I have squandered monies on these raw bare-brain'd Yonkers, fit only to be worn on Bankrupt days by Uncertificated Wits—to confess that I have familiarised my person to their companies, to the detriment of thy father's affairs, setting the seemliness of gentlemanhood aside, would be lying in my throat through the false passage of my mouth, would render the base pander my tongue worthy the center of a pewter-dish, to be crimp'd with capon, and engulph'd for a disobedient Jonas.

For thy father's sickness, I am not Esculapius, or I would prune and restore the old oak—but it hath shed it's acorns, and now comes winter—Is not the progression natural!

No more of the departed monies, Hal, an thou lovest me.—Would'st thou rake up the ashes of the dead?—Nay, an if that's thy humour, then must Pluto become a child of sight.

JOHN FALSTAFF.

THE



OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.



THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER TO HIS  
HIGHNESS OF WALES.

IF to do away insinuations of disaffection be as acceptable to a magnanimous prince, as it is indispensable to the subtle honour of a representative of Christ Jesus, I shall feel the less compunction in turning for a moment the current of your Highness's weighty thoughts; but they are already here; they must flow, my lord, with the channelled blood of the thousands of unabsolved souls lately sacrificed at the shrine of the Archdeceiver Rebellion.

Among the many Lords, Knights, and Esquires, resorting to Shrewsbury to render Oblations for the issue of this eventful contest, was the knight sir John Falstaff.—This layman, who accuseth me to your highness of disaffection, hath sullied his name in arms by defiling the sacred temple of his God. He is excommunicate; nor can aught, save the Toe of the Almighty's viceregent save him from everlasting perdition. My lord, while other barons and knights, his majesty's liege-subjects, were making rich oblations and endowments for the maimed soldiery, while the  
priesthood

priesthood chaunted forth the excellencies of charity, and the offertory laboured with costly gifts, the solemnities were suddenly arrested by the clamours of sir John Falstaff, and a crew of disorderly retainers, for bread and wine. The functionaries of the Highest were blasphemously attacked with gross speech and uncouth phrase\*, and the sacred wine riotously and tumultuously ravished from their hands. Menaces of your highness's displeasure were muted from his unclean lips, and the vassals of the holy Virgin excited to irreverend demeanour by gesticulations more seemly to the spontaneous foil of youth, than the furrowed glebb of age. They were recreantly expelled, and solemn Excommunication pronounced against this impious man, who had profanely tendered a copper groat as an oblation, and libidinously drank with carnal appetite the blood of his Redeemer. If here, my lord, be room for treason, if the anathema of the church weigh too heavily with this contempt of its jurisdiction, I am content that imputed disaffection to my liege fill up the balance.

There is another matter, my lord.—Sir

\* I fear ancient Pistol was in this coil.

John,

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

John, as I am well advised, is no purlieuman. By the statute of his deceased majesty, none is to hunt unpossessed of certain hereditary lands. This knight hath not the substance of a pace; yet under the cloak of your Highness' sacred name, his hounds unleashed by swain-motes, are loosed to every demesne. His soldiers, the curbing yoke of discipline slipped from their franchised necks, yerke at the unprescript, but sacred laws of society, and bleed the unredressed peasantry;—nay, himself standeth not unaccused of certain enormities. In the ejectionment of this unworthy man, the sacred service of the altar was violated. God forbid that suspicion should undeservedly call down a two-fold infamy, and blend sacrilege with impiety; but the very precisian, my lord, hath here scope for liberal conjecture:—the silver candlesticks dedicated to the service of the holy Virgin, were stolen. True—the unhallowed theft may be ascribed to other than the knight or his retainers, for the tainted wether doth infect the whole flock: but, my lord, when Judas betrayed his master, the tumult of his followers was but a cloak for the—*All hail!*

Your Highness' liege-subject, WORCESTER.

THE



## THE PRINCE TO FALSTAFF.

AND so, Jack, thou didst piously offer up ten pound in humble gratitude for my safety—ha! ha! ha!—Here is Ned Poins doth protest 'twas much more—In good truth, Percy was a lusty warrior.—How long didst lay, Jack? Fifteen minutes, as thou say'st, by Shrewsbury clock. By the mass, a very miser!—Thou should'st have sacrificed fifty times ten pound, and covered a score rood with thy fat Offerings. Had Hotspur been the minion of the God, farewell Jack! he had certainly mistaken thee for my greasepot, yea, dipped his sword in thy ribs, and founded a retreat.

I pr'ythee hast ever beheld Satan, where the Apostle hath placed him a tip-toe on the pinnacle of the Temple? Not in Judea, Jack. Thou may'st view him, sans optick, at thy own Jerusalem, Eastcheap, on mine hostess's tapestry.—What say'st thou to a likeness of him, with me at thy side for a Saviour? Not the hoary Roman, whom the Gaul caught by the chin, could shew more ample reverence of beard than doth the tempter (meaning thee),

or

or more meekness of carriage (that's myself, Jack), than the tempted.

My lord of Worcester, methinks, hath most excellent characters.—See here his letter.—By Harry Percy dead, but he should be a pope.—Why he would rate rebellion, that not a Scot would dare to call us Bolingbroke\*, for very dread of his anathema. Canst thou not help him to the triple crown, Jack; thou, and Bardolph, and Pistol?—A copper groat, marry, and a pair of silver candlesticks, to bribe my lord's Cardinals—ha! ha! ha!—Well, Jack, thou art excommunicate; and whether the bosom of the church ever receives thee again, no matter—There's nobody, I believe, cares less than thyself. For his holiness' toe—I prythee hast good pig's trotters with thy Shallow law-giver?—Which had'st rather muzzle?—The barefoot is a pleasant pilgrimage to Rome.

Ned Poins doth insist thou art nine pounds nineteen shillings eight-pence my debtor—Why, thou vaunting Pharisee, what is be-

\* Probably the contemptuous manner in which the opposite party spoke of the house of Lancaster.

come

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

come of thy ten pound oblation? I tell thee what, Jack,—Here is my father much sick—I may be a king, heaven knows how soon, perchance to-night—If ever thou dost cloak excess beneath the name of Harry the Fifth—if ever receive bribes to conceal rebels, (and this thou knowest I am well advised of) thy look'd-for exaltation shall be on the gallows of Haman\*.

Farewell!



FALSTAFF TO THE PRINCE.

HA! ha! ha! And dost thou think I would not offer up ten pound for thee? Yea, a hundred—more——But take heed of displeasing in thy sacrifice. Cain did bring a kid, yea, a firstling upon the altar, and the blaze ascended not. Abel did gather simple herbs, penny-royal, Hal, and mustard, a four-penny matter, and the odour was grateful.——I had ten pound for the holy offertory—mine ancient Pistol doth know it—but the angel did arrest my hand. Could I go beyond the word?—The angel which did stretch forth his finger, lest the good patriarch slay his son.

\* Poor sir John's views were rather confined; only *fifty foot* to look forward to for preferment.

That

That Ned Poins hath more colours than a jay, more abuse than a taught pie, and for wit——the cuckow's dam may be Fool of the Court to him. I lie down at Shrewsbury out of base fear! I melt into roods, and acres, and poles! I tell thee what, Hal, there's not a subject in the land hath half my temperance of valour.—Did I not see thee combating the man-queller, Hotspur; yea, in peril of subduement? Was it for me to lose my sweet Hal without a thrust, having my rapier, my habergeon, my good self about me? I did lie down in the hope of sberking him in the rib—Four drummers and a fifer did help me to the ground.—Didst thou not mark how I did leer upon thee from beneath my buckler? That Poins hath more scurrility than is in a whole flock of disquieted geese.

For the rebels I did conceal, thou should'st give me laud.—I did think thou wert already encompassed with more enemies than the resources of man could prevent overwhelming thee; yea, that thou wert the dove on the waters of Ararat, and didst lack resting-place. Was it for me to heap to thy manifold disquiets? Was it for me to fret thee with the  
advice

advice of more enemies than thou didst already know of? I could not take their lives, and therefore did I take their monies.—I did fine them, lest they should 'scape, Hal, thou dost understand me, without chastisement;—yea, I fined them for a punishment. They did make oath on the point of my sword to be true men—An the rogues forswore themselves, and joined the Welchman, let them look to it—'tis no 'peachment of my virtue.

Thou didst conceit me a cherisher of rebellion—I must hang, forsooth, upon conception!—Fie, Hal, Fie! Didst thou ever know mother to wean upon *conception*?—Fie!

Mine host Shallow doth greet thee well; he doth protest “thou art a good back-swordf—man, or the young earl's degree would never “have been lowered;—the Northumbrians “were ever good at fence.”

He doth remember the old duke at tournament, Hal.—Ha! ha! ha!

I do purpose entertaining the Justice at Eastcheap—a rare guest, Hal,—*Justice* at mis-  
trefs



OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

trefs Quickly's; but therefore the more welcome.—Oh! he will give thee the dry laugh till thou art as much disjointed, yea, as the gates of Gaza.—He will be a very Sampson unto thee—He will pluck thee down.

I come, master Shallow, I come.—I am bidden to supper, Hal.—Let me hear of thee, but a' God's name no more acrimony, an thou lovest

JACK FALSTAFF.



JUSTICE SHALLOW TO DAVY.

How do affairs go? How do things go on, Davy? Are the sheep-stealers taken? Marry, bid Robin Bratton look to the deer, and let there be a fall among the Pollards that look to the Cleys.—We must have a good prospect, Davy—We don't look far enough—A lord should look far—I must have a pedigree conceived—Pelt, the tanner, must get some skins ready, a large skin or two—a new lord hath always a new pedigree.—Bid William take the streaked ram from the ewes, and let the 14 acre headland be thrown into the park—marry, for the red wheat—it must not appear.—A sad loss, Davy, but the rutting must

muſt have ſcope.—We muſt enlarge the deer-  
feld—ſir John loves veniſon.

I hope, Davy, you comport yourſelf as be-  
comes the repreſentative of one of the Quo-  
rum. I would be underſtood, that you keep  
up your dignity, and carry your body diſ-  
creetly, and ſoberly, and ſedately, and not  
prabble and drink at common houſes.—You  
are too much given to it, Davy.

It may pleaſe his ſacred majeſty, that I  
yield up his gracious commiſſion—I ſay,  
Davy, 'tis a thing that is poſſible; and I could  
deſire and wiſh, that my couſin Silence ſhould  
have a doughty helpmate, one who knows the  
laws of the land, and could enforce his Maj-  
eſty's moſt gracious briefs and ordinances.  
——Your underſtanding is good, Davy, and  
you have an indifferent knowledge in the  
ſtatutes.—I could wiſh to ſee you in better  
proviſion; but indeed you do not comport  
yourſelf with that clean decency I could de-  
ſire.—Whenever it pleaſeth his moſt gracious  
majeſty to call for my help and aſſiſtance at  
the Quorum, I ordinarily dine on ſlender pot-  
tage—you know it, Davy.—It preserves me  
clear

clear and comprehensible; and, o'my conscience, you consume and devour leeks, and cheese, and fat bacon, in lieu of your morning hymns and prayers, and ruct at the mouth and elsewhere, and belch, o'my conscience, as loud as any Caliver, to the great detriment of every thing seemly, and in defiance of good rule in society. You must correct yourself, Davy—you must correct yourself—It is a difficult point in rooting up ancient habits and customs, but it would not be kindly and good to make you suddenly great with all your stains and blotches upon you.—No—'tis meet we first grub up and eradicate the weeds, Davy;—and then the soil, if indeed it be not too arid, will kindly receive the germs, the seed, Davy, of any thing good and palatable.

Take my three-cornered beaver, in which I beheld his last most gracious Majesty crowned, and see if you can begin to look a little creditable. Marry, are the Little Johns ploughed, and in proper and soft state for sowing?—See that it be done, Davy—'tis more than time it were done.—Look to it, Davy.

Bless my heart and soul!—'twere simply a  
sufficiency

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sufficiency to flay any beast of burthen.—A matter of six score miles in half a score hours!—'Tis four leagues by the sixty minutes!—Measure it by ten, Davy, and it amounts to a point.



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE  
\*LORD SHALLOW.

Davy to Ditto.

I WISH your good Worship many blessings.—Marry, I humbly thank your worship for the precepts, and will, with our holy Mary's help, comport myself as your Worship was wont, and speak as much as any he at the Quorum.

†Clement Perkes, your Worship, was seen in the park yesternight, when the castle was going twelve.—I humbly think he was knocking your Worship's deer in the head, and had him secured and put in the stocks, for the terror of all attempters.—He's a great knave, your

\* Davy, I suppose, anticipated the honours of his master.

† Davy could never away with this Clement Perkes. Vide Henry the IVth.—1st Scene of the 5th Act.

Worship;

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

Worship; and I humbly think, with your Worship's leave, of giving him a good whipping.—I'm fure if he was not after the deer, he wanted to kill the old ram; for h'as got, marry ever since he's been in the stocks, h'as got, as your Worship was wont to say, a sheep-biting face.

What your Worship says of the weeds is very just.—I humbly thank your Worship for the beaver.—I humbly suppose, your Worship, it was fellow-mate to the sun-coloured doublet your Worship was wont to look so well in at the Quorum; tho' it sits more wrinkled upon your Worship now than it did formerly; your Worship's belly grows thinner and genteeler.—Your Worship would not think how it sits upon me—its close as any mail.—I've clean left off rusting, your Worship.

That Clement Perkes has spoken flat burglary of your Worship.—A' says I'm a dog.—Your Worship was wont to say to a saucy malefactor, that his Majesty was in you, and you in his Majesty—good.—And a'nt I in your Worship, and your Worship in me? A' says

says I'm a dog!—I'll have him laid fast, till your Worship shall come to give directions at the Quorum, whether he shall be hang'd or transported.

Would it please your Worship to give directions about the ringers?—Ah! your worship, they did so do it!—they drank a whole hog'shead of your Worship's ale.—William Vifor has been of the peal two and thirty years come Lammas, and I humbly beseech your Worship he may have a crown above the rest.

The headland fences are all down, and the hens are very busy at getting your Worship's crop in.—Fourteen acre of seedland's a great matter; but your Worship's pullets will thrive against the large Knight shall accompany your Worship to town.—A' loves capon.—Did your Worship mark how a' took all the wings and thighs 'twixt his finger and thumb, and put 'em in his great belly, an they had been so many plumbs?

Marry, your Worship, Robin has shot two deer for the pedigrees, as your Worship was pleased

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

pleased to call 'em.—Master Pelt has got the skins—Marry, will your Worship say, whether they are to be tanned like your Worship's buckler, or how?—I humbly wait your Worship's directions in this point.



ANTIEN PISTOL TO SIR JOHN.

Dated, it seems, from Windfor.

SIR Knight, lament—be tristful—rue—for Bawcockhood is dead, extinct—the maw of Majesty hath it engulph'd——Kinghood's a thing of nought, a 'scutcheon damn'd, of blazonry most base.—I hold it to my lip, and from my portly lungs call up Sir Æolus to bid the Lazar scoul. The King his memories hath grasped by the heel, and dipp'd in Lethe——Or he is mad become; the Cur hath bit him—he doth the thing eschew, that senses most did love.

Thy letter, Knight, in spite of yeomen and base hounds of Hesperus, which did him circumvent, I did deliver to the quondam Hal. “The man of mickle span unto his lovely “bully”—Thus Antient Pistol——whereon the

the Fry of Majesty, Herodian worms and infects damn'd also, which Lucifer doth hatch upon his morning crown, did mow and chatter like to apes of Ind'. Shall Pistol shoulder'd be, and shall he recreant flee before the elbow of base sycophant, and shall good phrase be bastardis'd? I will revenges have, by Rowen' and her Chalice——I will arouse and woo the Fates, the sisters three—Concubinage is good—and they shall brooding on my pillow lay in consult deep, how flint and steel a spark may strike to blow up pandourship most base——My heart's a heart of flint——My forefoot ekes most subtil——Why then let fellowship ensue, let heart and hand combine, and let the web be spun——Ulysses baffle all!

Sir John, thy Pistol and thy Legate hath been greeted foul—Not Bardolph, filching Wight, that pluck'd the star to deck his nose, when blanketed unto the Welkin's height for chewing Bakers Roll, where Baker's Roll should not be chewn——Not Nym, whose humour was in pillory to stand ycoverd o'er with gold most potable for Yonker's silver whistle stol'n,—did feel reaction's force like Pistol. Shall goodly phrase be yclept uncouth,  
and



OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

and shall it bandied be like base Æolian bladder? Why then come Rowen's Chalice—— though bitter be the draught, I will avenge or die.

Thine ANTIENT PISTOL.



FALSTAFF TO ANTIENT PISTOL.

My good Antient, I do condole with thee. —The King hath no more respect unto an embassy, than the fox hath unto the sex of the goose.——I am in myself greater than a Prince, yea, in my personal right; and he doth make me out of myself less than a peasant, marry, to my personal wrong. There be more Days in the court, than there be seconds in the day——I should have displayed my presents, and then would'st thou have had present audience.—That Hal is become a very Ottoman—but be not thou discomfited——We must rally, we must rally, lads——We have been twice trodden down in open attack, and now to the sap-work.——The King doth love venison—We will to Master Shallow's in Gloucestershire—he hath a deep Deer-feld —'tis a county of a clamorous rut——We did borrow his monies by day; but we must make  
bold

bold with his bucks by night——They have horns, good mine Antient, they have horns——’tis dangerous to meddle with Cuckoldom by day.

I grieve thou wert so forely dealt with at the Court——I have salves for a bruise, an thou dost need them—salves, which I did apply to mine own discolourments.——Thou knowest I was trodden down like fugar for an export——yea, I was made a convenience——I was shap’d into a Promontory, which spectators of a subaltern height did flock to for a sight of passing Majesty—they did ascend and course o’er my belly like pismires, ants on a mole-hill, save that the compression was greater.——But ’twas ever the nature of Man to trample on fallen greatness—’tis no marvel.

Let Nym be advised of our expedition—Corporal Bardolph and myself will speedily quit Eastcheap, and rendezvous on the outskirts of Windsor—We will line our shambles with venison, and then, my lads, to Windsor again——Hal shall yet be our own.

JOHN FALSTAFF.

CORPORAL

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.



CORPORAL NYM TO SIR JOHN.

I WILL no more with Pistol rob—I do revolt—My fist is struck, and that's the humour on't—his phrases are known on the road. Venison hath mickle sweets—and sweets are luscious things, and luscious things do fit the maw of Nym; but thieves do hang, and their accomplices; and Nym would hang alone—Doth the humour pass? The Antient is abstruse—he robs not at a word—Travellers ken not his phrase, and parley is not good on the road; and that's the humour on't.—I do revolt, but mutiny is quell'd with grants; let Pistol utter couthly, and then come fellowship again—When speech will not bewray, then Gloucestershire's the word—But, *pauca*, Nym's a man of few—Sir John, I touch my brow—my fist is flat.

NYM.



FALSTAFF TO ANTIENT PISTOL.

WHAT at spurs, good mine Antient? and an adventure afoot too! By my troth, I'll no cock-fighting—Pullets, pullets, are your only encounter. We that do assail are cannibals, indeed;

deed; but Mistrefs Partlet is frequent in her travail, and so fociety fhall not lack fperm.

I pr'ythee let Corporal Nym have his humour: thou art a fhrewd linguift——thou haft ever a throng of goodly quips and conceits; yea, more at thy tongue's beck, than he that doth refine from his brain with the help of the Still, Time: but they are crude, they are crude, mine Antient—they do lack droffing—they are like to an unwrought commodity, which the handicraftsman cannot utter, until it is fhap'd to the purpofes of the confumer.

Here is Bardolph doth proteft, 'twas thou who did'ft flight him from foot to foot throughout the croud at the Installation: thou had'ft robbed with him in the purlieus of the town, and the knaves did recognise thy quaintnefs of phrafe; thy Shibboleth, Antient, thy Shibboleth.——Oh!'tis moft damn'd to be mark'd like a tupp'd ewe.——A flenderness of heel was indeed friendly to thy own retreat; but the Corporal, Heaven protect his parts! was compell'd to borrow expedition, marry, without pledge, and retire into him-  
felf

felf like a hedgehog, that fo he might travel with the better eafe on the toes of the town—  
Ha! ha! ha! O'my confcience, I marvel he blaz'd not like the Phœnix—he had fire and faggot on his fide—his nofe for a kindle, and his carcafe for a fuel; and both in clofe league.

I entreat thee, mine Antient, to lay afide, yea, altogether reform thefe fierce fallies of thy tongue, and rob as a Gentleman fhould do; by the mafs, thou wilt hang us all—— thou wilt do it, mine Antient, thou wilt do it. Remembereft thou not, how the lunatick Bifhop did rate me to the Prince? An he had ever taken my good name in vain, but for thy incontinent flow of gall, then am I the groffeft thief afoot.—Marry, I am not the moft fpare, for indeed I do empty me all purfes, yea be their bottoms as deep as Hell; but I do mean in my perfon, my reins, where there is lefs fpecifick fat than is requifite to the peopling of a dozen wicks——Sack, fpirit of burnt fack, doth make the belly gasconade and fwell.

I did purpofe being at the rendezvous ere now; but I muft tarry here a feafon longer;  
do

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

do not thou and Nym break out again—I  
pr'ythee yield to him, mine Antient—It were  
a foul thing we should fledge, and upon  
'peachment too!

Farewell!



ANTIEN T PISTOL TO SIR JOHN.

SHALL paucity of phrase and impotence  
also,  
Curb Manhood with the rein?  
And shall it chew the bit?  
Shall Mutes and Asian dogs controul the  
tongue;  
And shall not Man speak free?  
Why then Avernus roar!  
Then Rhadamanth' his yawning floodgates  
ope,  
And \*Rowen' brim her Chalice!

\* The Editor most respectfully appeals to Mr. Malone  
for the sense of this word so frequently in the Antient's  
mouth—Having in vain ransacked *Chaucer, Ben Jon-  
son, Beaumont and Fletcher, Middleton and Rowley, &c.*  
&c. &c. he is at length compelled to print it *literatim*  
from the MS. for the comments of more learned men  
than himself.

Why

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

*Why then let icy death seize all,  
Yea, upward from the foot unto the lungs,  
And then the heart, perdy!*

The Nym's a pauper vile—I do retort—he hath not utterance to woo his dog to bite at badger—I do retort—his rest is eadem, the *semper* eadem—he cannot cull—his senses are most barren——Ah! beeve-mouth'd bleating Nym! Ah! bull-calf old! I have and I will hold the pristine tones of Man——The Nym doth iterate, doth bay the echo with his “humour on't.”—And shall he model be? Then Pistol, bow thy knee no more to Dagon—Sir John, thy Philistine doth flee—Avaunt the flux of fellowship, and *solus* be the word!



DEPOSITION TAKEN BEFORE MASTER ROBERT SHALLOW, AND MASTER SLENDER, AT WINDSOR.

SHALLOW.

Now, good man, what is your business? what is the matter that you would desire to disclose?—Marry, I am of the Commission in the

the county of Gloucester; but if you have any thing to depose, that is salutary, and beneficial, and for the welfare and good of his most gracious Majesty, I care not:—Robert Shallow, Esquire, will take cognizance of it, though in the county of Berks.

*Fellow.* May it please your Worship, I've a goatherd; and I've a great matter to break.——Marry, your Worship, marry, when his Majesty's life's in danger from a Caitiff-monster, an't it the duty of every honest subject to stand up and defend? An't that law? I would know that of your Worship.

*Shallow.* 'Tis among the Statutes.—'Tis the duty of every tall fellow, or he's liable to be 'peach'd upon the act as an abettor.—Proceed, good man—'tis just, very just—marry, proceed.——Trust me, a comprehensive fellow, Cousin Abram.—Marry, proceed.

*Fellow.* Being on the return yesternoon to dinner—'twas just about twelve o'clock, for us poor folk, your Worship, are hungry before your great-oneyers—as I was coming home, I say, to dinner, for tho' I am but a  
simple



OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

simple lodger, mine host Thacker pays Scot and Lot like a good subject.—Does your Worship know him? A' sells trotters and Jews'-harps, opposite Gil. Sneke, the weaver's——

*Slender.* 'Tis a small shot from Ann Page's, Cousin Shallow—Is't not, good youth?

*Fellow.* No, your Worship—It's hard upon where——

*Shallow.* Aye, 'tis no matter, 'tis no matter.—Marry, go on—briefly, good man.

*Fellow.* As I was faying, walking mainly on, thinking, God wot, what a mite a groat and a half a day is for seven souls!—For there's my wife Nel, and Martin, and Nich, and Jerome, and Dorcas, and Ruth—it's a wounded many teeth, and a teasterworth o' corn will hardly set them all grinding; and your Worship knows, that quinces are very windy and griping to the belly—Body o'me, I thought our Jerome would ha' been scoured——

*Shallow.* Stand away, further, fellow.—By the mafs, a foul varlet.—You smell, fellow—get ye gone.

*Slender.*

*Slender.* Truly, Cousin——

*Shallow.* O' my confcience, 'tis the arrantest  
——Foh! get ye gone, knave; get ye gone——

*Slender.* Truly, Cousin, our Gloucestershire quince doth not reek thus—Indeed, la, you do him wrong.——Have you no pippins for your children, good youth? My Cousin could never away with a quince.—Your county hath good pears, too.

*Fellow.* I han't a fingle one, your Worship; not an atomy of any thing, only one quince-tree, as lonesomely as any yew.—As I was faying, our Jerome——

*Shallow.* Tell me not of your Jeromes and your Chrysoftoms—be not so windy—be brief—Marry, to the point——

*Fellow.* I humbly beseech your Worship's pardon.——As I was faying, walking mainly on—'twas just in the nick, where our Dorcas goes to bleach in Datchet.—Does your Worship know the place?—What does I hear, but a great roaring an it had been any large bull a  
neighing;

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

neighing; not a *horse*, your Worship—and the river bulg'd up and swell'd like any—I humbly beseech your Worship that our Nel have a pension——

*Shallow.* Pension! Why a pension, marry? 'Ods liggens! Know you what you ask, knave? Marry, why a pension?

*Fellow.* Truly, your Worship, 'twould be very hard that my family should live upon all quinces for a disease of mine caught in the King's affairs—Truly, your Worship, 'twould be very hard; for the water roll'd and wetted me, and I trembled, and trembled—I'm sure, an' please your Worship, I've an ague.

*Shallow.* O' my conscience, Cousin Abram, but the man is a lunatick, or a mountebank, or something as bad——O' my conscience, I believe a mountebank; for indeed he moves from place to place, and varies his points very knavishly.——Look you, friend—there is only one alternative shall serve; marry, chuse; and do it deliberately, and discreetly, and soberly—Either depose in a respectful manner, marry, without idle prabble about pensions,  
and

and quinces, and bulls; either utter with a proper and decent carriage and demeanour, or else walk fedately out into the court-yard, and pull off your doublet, and your shirt, and your coat.—An a shrewd flogging don't bring him about——

*Fellow.* Oh! good your Worship, I've almost done——When the water swell'd, and swell'd, I perceived about a hundred paces a-head, a large creature rise up, mainly big, your Worship, about the belly, and it came slowly to the bank, an if it would land; and just then it roll'd over, and over, and over, of all the world like a huge tub, and then it so beat about and roar'd in the throttle!—An your Worship will give me leave, I'll try to  
——

*Shallow.* Marry, go on—proceed circumstantially—go on—what saw you more?—Depose briefly.

*Fellow.* When a' had floundered, and flounc'd about some five minutes under water, a' got on the land, and stood on it's legs, and drew a great dagger and lifted in the air, and  
fo

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

so hook it's weapon at the Castle, and roar'd!  
Good, your Worship, I'm certain it hath a foul  
design against the King's life—that I'll be  
sworn of upon the book.

*Slender.* I protest, Cousin, the——

*Shallow.* In the name of his Majesty's  
sacred person, I command and bind you to  
answer all interrogatories afore the Council.  
—Here is a great conspiracy come to light.

*Slender.* Truly, Cousin, I——

*Shallow.* Marry, it had the gait of a war-  
rior—I would mean, it shewed a tall person-  
able figure, did it not? Betook it to the water  
again? And for it's complexion—marry, you  
observ'd it's countenance?

*Fellow.* An your Worship means the hue of  
it's skin, truly it had a doublet and hose on:  
—but the face was all the world of a colour  
with the bubucle at the left of your Worship's  
nose.

*Slender.* By yea and no, Coz——

*Shallow.*

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*Shallow.* 'Tis the Welchman \*Glendower, by my hopes of salvation through the pious and holy Virgin Mary!—The Privy Council must know it.—Here is a great Conspiracy—I'll to the Council.

*Fellow.* Marry, your Worship, fure a' was not a Salamander!—The water smoak'd and smoak'd, that, body o'me! you might ha' poach'd an egg!

*Shallow.* 'Tis Owen the Welchman, a very doughty Rebel—Fellow, be in readines—You must depose at the Council—By the Mass, a great Traitor.—Be at hand.

*Fellow.* I humbly beseech your Worship that our Nel——

\* Shrewdly conceived, and profoundly, by Master Robert Shallow. For a man, of whom Holingshed and other writers relate such wonders, to travel a score or two leagues Fish-fashion, were the most easy and consistent thing in the world. Take water at Radnor, pass Brecknock and Monmouthshires, land and cut across the country; wet his fins again at Cirencester, by Oxford, Wallingford, &c. &c. bait at Marlow, and thus to Datchet.

*Shallow.*

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

*Shallow.* Aye, aye—be in readinefs—She  
fhall be look'd to.



ANTIENT PISTOL AND CORPORAL NYM  
TO SIR JOHN.

PISTOL, lament—Sir Nym, the Willow be,  
And hang o'er Datchet's fide;  
For chivalry is in, and unto Charon damn'd  
Muft, crouching, tender coin.  
Pistol hath wrongs; but Pistol eke hath pouch.  
Sir Nym hath humours borne; but Nym will  
pocket too.

Why then caft Rancour forth, yea into utter  
night,

And let it gnafh the tooth.

Sir John, arife——thy knighthood is de-  
fam'd——

At thee the Shallow afs and Slender foal do  
bray.

Thou art the mark of Archery become  
To Council wags——Oh! damned Gloucefter  
beafts,

That will not wince, when hinds do ride and  
fpur!

We

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

We do inclose what goatherd hath depos'd.  
The quip's afoot, and quips do amble fast.  
Arise, Sir Knight, or Pæans will enfue;  
Yea, from the mouth of ballad-teeming har-  
ridans.  
Pistol\* hath wrongs; but he doth caution  
thee,  
The River and the Ford also to flee.  
Nym will have right ere he doth say, *avoid*—  
But Scylla's deep, and that's the humour  
on't.

ANTIEN T PISTOL.  
CORPORAL NYM.



MRS. FORD TO SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

AH! dear Sir John! I tremble to think what  
you have suffered.—Tell me, has the wittolly  
wretch discoloured your poor stomach? But,  
alas! I'm too certain of it—I felt it all, every  
blow;—no wonder he put you into such a

\* It should be observed, that Sir John had discarded  
Nym and Pistol for refusing to become his emissaries  
in the design on Ford's wife.—See *Merry Wives of  
Windfor* Act I. Scene 3.

territ



territ and fright—Mercy on me, how shrewdly he handled his weapon!

Well, I always will say the stars were of a mouse-colour when you were born.—Think, if you had been let into the Thames directly upon this exercise——Indeed, la', I won't call it *beating*—all melting with heat—for, indeed, Sir John, I never beheld you run so nimbly—bruis'd, and frightened, as you were! Mercy on me, 'twould have been your death, quite a forfeit!——Yes; your stars are certainly of a mouse-colour;—they are neither black nor white——

Ah! dear Sir John! you little know the ——but let the end speak.—Well; to think of the tears that your mischances have cost me! Heigho!

Beshrew my weak head, but I dreamt all last night of horns.——Oh! I beheld a great calf fastened to a stake, and he was baited, of all things in the world, by such a sweet portly boar-pig, so plump and so sweet! And he was so gored and tossed as often as ever he came into the ring, (indeed, Sir John, it's ominous  
—you

—you shan't enter my house again) that it quite funk my heart within me. — La', and it was so whimsical! for in capered a pretty youngish Gentleman, and he danced and played upon his Kit round and round the Calf, till he stood quite dumfounded; and presently there shot out of his head large Horns, and soon they grew larger, and larger, and larger, and spread, and spread, till they looked of all the world like Herne's Oak; and we all danced about him so merry, that it was quite whimsical. — La', Sir John, you shall meet me at the Oak, and we'll have a revethere, and I'll directly fend Dr. Caius to cure your poor bruises—I will be humoured in this—a poor weak woman, that hazards her reputation for your sake, and not to be pleased in such a trifle! Indeed, now, I will not be refused.— Dr Caius shall immediately come to cure your knocks and bruises, and then it will be so pure to dance at midnight round the Oak! La' now, indeed, it will. In this I rest,

Your loving,

ALICE FORD.

SIR



SIR JOHN FALSTAFF TO MRS. FORD.

I'LL caper—I'll dance with thee,—Any thing, any thing, my Queen of Sheba, but no Doctor Caius.—Indeed my hurts are not of that extent—No—I have a surgeon of my own employ too—No, I'll not see him. Can I live to hear it bandied from mouth to mouth, that the Knight Falstaff, he who hath nightly taken his repose under the ach of more soldier like bruises than the spirit of the holy Stephen fled upon, that *he* hath foregone his days of hardihood, and commenced Glyster in the hands of a dole-dealing Esculapian—Name it not: rather hang me by the gills on Mistress Keech's stilliards, and mete me out by half-p'worths to the parish poor.—No; I'll no Caius. What, I'm to meet thee at Herne's Oak?—Well, I'll be a Nimrod—I'll personate any thing to encounter my fair Camilla; any thing, save an Eunuch and a Wode-woman.—I would, Mistress Ford, I might have dealt him a fillip on the crown.—I have one bruise larger than a porter's shoulder-knot—'tis on my cheek, I cannot fit, ny  
nether

nether cheek; for, indeed, I lack'd the habiliments of a woman—I was sparsely coated.——But I had determined to forget this—Yea, I'll forget it—'tis laudable in Man to be passive.

Shall I order my horses? 'Twere best be fleet, should the knave find us again.—There is a pond at hand, and I would be loth to reign over a subaltern province: no—an I am born to be deified, an I must needs be a God of the Waters, let me be immersed on the point of a Whaler's Harpoon—Give me to preside in Greenland, my natal soil.—Ha! ha! ha!

Thou seest, Mistress Ford, I am incontinently given to merriment, in despite of the fiery ordeals my flesh and blood have undergone.—But I love thee, I love thee, and there is much endurance in affection.

Let me have advice of thy appointments with Herne—I will attend thee with the precision of the dial, the dial of the night, which is Mistress Luna, the moon, unto his Oak——

And

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

And there we'll wanton caper on the plain,  
And weave for Herne a horn to wind again.

Farewell, fair Mistress Ford;—and remember, I'll no Leech Caius applied to me\*.



FALSTAFF TO BROOK.

COULD a gentleman foresee the many crosses, the many mishaps, that await him that simply treadeth within the sphere of a woman's habitation, (I speak not of gross corporeal touch) he would use after-lustration, as liberally as the pallid wretch, who had escaped him from the ravages of a pestilential Calenture.—There is a noisome rankness, to me more hateful than the †Cleyms of unslacken lime, that imperceptibly steals upon the whole man, who holds but even converse with a

\* Dr. Caius had been present at the beating of Falstaff when disguised as the Maid's Aunt of Brentford.—This accounts for his frequent cautions to Mrs. Ford.—He dreads a discovery.

† Cleyms were artificial sores raised by the application of unslacked lime on the legs of paupers, &c. for the purpose of exciting compassion in passengers.

woman.

woman. If the Box of Pandora was other than a combination of villainous qualities in one damn'd housewife, then am I a very box to contain the freedom of every man's reproach in.

I informed thee, Master Brook, of my skilful advances, of my seeming successes.—I likewise unfolded to thee of my mishaps, of the depth of the Datchet, and other localities.—I blended them, Master Brook, in order to preserve an equilibrium; lest the Avoirdupois of my successes might appear without dross, and so thou be led to build on an uncertain tenure.—I told thee too, how I became proxy for one Mistress Pratt, and in her behoof was compelled to gather up nimbly my chitterlings, my reins, and escape from the discipline of the knave Ford.—Prepend further—my molten frame being a little consolidated, a most soothing letter, tender withal, full of condolences, comes from Mistress Ford.—She assureth me, she felt every blow I received.—Master Brook, believe her not—the force of sympathy is faint, to the force centered in Ford's hand.—She lies in her throat.—The knave laid me out in such natural colours, I have every shade pertaining to  
the

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

the Herald's art in my body.—I cannot extract, or I should make money.—To love compulsatorily is not in the nature of Man.—I can be beat into a mummy, but not into love; but I'll woo for thee:—Expect her, Master Brook, expect her still.—I shall meet her at Herne's Oak—Call upon me, bring money—thou shalt hear more.

JOHN FALSTAFF.



FALSTAFF TO BROOK.

MASTER Brook, there is a point, which I did in some sort forget to touch upon—I will tell you; but, indeed, Master Brook, 'tis a subtle point, and I must handle it discreetly—for tho' it is not the Needle's point, Master Brook, yet may it goad; yea, and hath variations, and doth lay in a small compass.

I will tell you, Master Brook, and briefly, but you must be secret—I must play the light heel, flit to and fro like a shadow, to swift nimble tunes—Mistress Ford will have it so—I must dance, caper in the air like a tun of Molass'; only my ascension will be heavier, in  
regard

regard I must rise without a crane, Master Brook.—I did never practise the art as a Yonker, and now must I take to it as an old Man:—but 'tis for your sake, 'tis for your sake, Master Brook.—For mine own part, I had as lief swell out a Weaver's doublet, and compass my belly from the navel round with a dozen wisps of hemp, and manufacture, twist rope by the length.—I am not fashioned for the end of a \*pipe—I had as lief, for mine own part, bind myself to the common hangman, Master Brook, and supply the gibbet with ropes, yea, at a foul shirt per felon, Master Brook; for I am not fond of liquoring the ground—I was never a dancer, Master Brook—it is not my art—my soles do somehow cleave to the ground—I could never weigh them up twain at a caper, save when I did personate Mistress Pratt; for as a witch, Master Brook, I can vault like a roebuck—but then I must step out of myself.—I do remember, the Welch Priest did protest 'twas bread and cheese to him—he might have added butter, Master Brook—I lacked but Mistress Paget's churn to be shaped into pounds.—

\* Does Sir John mean as a pea, blown by the breath of school-boy?

But



OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

But I do err from my subject.—In few, Master Brook, Ford's wife will have me dance at the Oak, and you must commend me to a minstrel-founder—the flitting knave must tutor me, that so I appear not a stranger to the art—I must be conversant—for women, Master Brook, are won by the throng of good parts—the simple display of countenance hath no more purchase, than is in the shell of a boil'd Lobster—I do know it, I do know it, Master Brook.—I must write unto town for apparel; for the Thames hath somehow an antipathy to a good suit—I do smack of the Haddock. Do thou on thy part allow not the furlough to a moment; but haste, Master Brook.

JOHN FALSTAFF.



MISTRESS QUICKLY TO SIR JOHN  
FALSTAFF.

MERCY on me! Fall! I tell you what, Sir John—Dorothy must fall with it—I must have her warn'd to quit, and you must take to her, Sir John, and put some shifts to her back, you must.—An honest trifling gain of five-pence odd in the quart, and to be snatch'd from a  
poor

poor Widow, as one might say, without an atomy of reason! Sir John, you must take to her—you must spend upon her body—a fine shewy creature, goodfooth, with silk gowns and kirtles for the first Lady in the land, and not a modest change next her skin! Fie, Sir John! you ought to fit her, Sir John.—You know her nakedness—I have bought for her, and bought for her, and she hath pawn'd, and pawn'd, that 'tis quite a shame to think on—and I'm sure the gains of a poor hostess in drinkings won't pay for it. Sir John, I'll tell you what, Sir John—Here's been a great to do in my house, and all about you, Sir John—I shall be ruin'd and fracted—I must break—My Customers tell me you are gone, and I must charge sack a matter cheaper, and there's no scarcity now you are away.—Here's Master Martlet, that you call'd the Eves-dropper, 'cause, goodfooth, he had a bird's name—'twas no longer ago than yesterday,—says he, Goodwife Quickly,—*Goodwife*, Sir John—for he always names me so, altho' he knew my poor husband that's dead; and I tell him so, and then he says, I am your \*Lemon—and,

\* *Lemman*, or Mistress, I rather suppose to have been Master Martlet's meaning.

indeed,

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

indeed, Sir John, it's true enough; for you have squeez'd me, and squeez'd me, till I have not a bit of four left—yea, I am too humour-some to you, and you know it.—Well, as I was saying, there was Master Martlet—says he, Goodwife Quickly, who breeds, who lays your eggs? Alice Plenesperm, quoth I, and I take twelve dozen of a week when good Sir John's here, and six dozen when he 'journs. Then, says he, you must take half the price of sack away too, for the Knight's not here now to make a scarce—And with that, they all in a throng pertested I must 'bate and come down, or my house would not hold it's own—And, indeed, Sir John, it's grown quite a desert—only there are no beasts to be sure.—You are far away, and Bardolph, and Pistol, and there's no sport toward, as there was wont to be, and I'm oblig'd to lower to keep open house.

I beseech you, good Sir John, sweet Sir John, to come back quick, that I may bring the liquors to a good creditable head again, and not let them dwindle, and dwindle, that every flea-bitten rascal may perfume his blood like a gentleman, forsooth! I pray you  
now

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

now, Sir John, and don't let 'em ride an honest body—Here's Dorothy and myself—we have both been rode, Sir John, that it were a shame to mention how, since you have been at Windsor—And don't let the Boar fall away, Sir John.—There's Master Rahab, that loved Dol, thereby bringing you into Canaries, and Neighbour Dumb our minister, that used to come disguised in the green doublet, and Mr. 'Tolomy the Harlotry Player, they have all forsook Eastcheap, and gone into the suburbs, that we are quite, as one might say, no better than lone Penitents, and people of no character. Dol sends her service, and holds her own marvellously—I beseech you, good Sir John, to delay no longer than need.



MISTRESS QUICKLY TO SIR JOHN  
FALSTAFF.

A WHOLE fuit in fattin! Twelve and twelve's twenty-four—that's seven pound four—and fix is thirty——Sir John, I won't do it—You think I'm spun of fattin; yea, a worm, good-footh! But you shall see, Sir John, that I won't be trod on, as I have been—I won't  
credit

credit it, Sir John — You had a whole top-to-bottom suit at my charge no longer ago than two days before you 'journed—'twas the same day that you had such a kind letter from the King—and you can't have worn them a pin's point. You want to give it to women, Sir John, and I won't countenance such villainies. Here's one Mistress Urfula calls here about you, and you ought to be 'sham'd to leave Dol in the manner you have. I have tended you myself late and early, and wash'd your flesh before and behind, and help'd you to bed—Yes, Sir John, when you could not help yourself, that you'd have died of being senseless and dead of liquor——I've put salt on your belly o'nights, or you'd have burst—pounds and pounds of salt, when you were swell'd, that I never got the tythe of a dram for; that nobody, not my own servants, would touch, Sir John. 'Twas but at Allhallowmas that I lent you money, thirteen pound odd that you won at Primero and was not paid——You promis'd I should have it on the morrow; but you did not say what morrow, and I wonder how you should, goodfooth, when my own servants know you never won a groat of it.

Come

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

Come and discharge a poor Hostess's dues, Sir John, like an honest man, do—and don't give kirtles away and never pay for them.—Here's Mr. Dombledon had well nigh got Dol's body for a kirtle you gave her with your own hands—I can witness it, and the poor young creature has been compell'd to part with her ear-rings and bracelets to prevent an arrest.—It's a shame, Sir John, and you need not send any more for fatten to me, Sir John, for I won't part with another yard's-worth to you again, while my name's Quickly; and so you may get it where you can, Sir John.



SIR JOHN FALSTAFF TO MISTRESS  
URSULA.

No, no, no—thou art misadvised—thou dost suffer Baker's wives, and barren Gossips, who do conceive upon the novelties of a stale world, get the rule over thee.—The King doth counsel with me in the chewing of a Spanish Nut—He knoweth not the height of six foot himself—I do prick his very yeomen for him—Even now hath there been with me a certain Welch Priest in these parts, who would  
have

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

have access unto the Court—Why he doth present me with a silver toaster, as a bribe, a prologue to his induction—Take it—I do give it thee—'Tis nothing in respect of what thou shalt possess. Thou art one of the first Ladies in the land, an thou wert but sensible of it. If 'twere as thou say'st, that the King doth neglect me, and like the wicked Rehoboam hath taken unto young Counsellors, why should I tarry at Windsor? Let that suffice thee.

Thirty yards of Fustian! I may not hear of it.—Shall it be said, that Sir John Falstaff doth take his seat among the Nobles of the land in the vest of an unbelieving Rabbi? It may not be.—Why, I must do the King honour.—Sattin, sattin, is your only Courtier's wear. Come, come—'tis only a pretty provoking humour thou hast of giving the lustre to thy favours.—Let it be four and twenty yards then—Keep the remnant for new ruffs, and adorn thee for thy advancement.—Why, there it is now—I have simply more ductility than the nimblest quicksilver, and less opposition than a drove goose—I am tractable to anything, and thou seest it—any thing, that may add to the excellent favour of thy countenance

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

tenance—I have not controul of mine own will—thou hast used spells with me—but thou know’st this, thou know’st this—I have told thee so before.

Let it be a quarter\* yard wider than I did at first speak of.—Let me have it speedily, for I may not appear at Court—and indite direct letters unto me of thy desires—Chuse thy own dignity—look out for thyself—be prodigal, be prodigal—all is in my gift.—Thou may’st become the Goddess Dian’ an thou wilt, and lead the chace——Thou wilt look well with a quiver—for I do mean to preserve the Rangership. No more scruples, but be quick in my affairs, and so shalt thou be procurers of thine own greatness.

Adieu!

JOHN FALSTAFF.



\* Sir John is determined not to lose by his boasted acquiescence.

MASTER



OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.



MASTER SLENDER TO ANN PAGE.

FAIR Mistrefs Ann, sweet Mistrefs Ann, Abraham Slender craveth leave and liberty to falute thy white hand—He doth by these commend his worthleffness unto thy grace and favour. He would be thy slave, thy servant, to the height and extremity of all vow'd service; to wit, thy fuitor and thy wooer. Yet not so much of his own free motion, indeed la', as because his friends desire it of him—that is to say, his friends will, that thus matters should stand. There is the learned Doctor Sir Hugh Evans, and the wise and Worshipful Justice Shallow, my good friend and relation, stand by me in this matter. I will briefly recount what words were uttered in my hearing no longer ago than Thursday was a fortnight—I do remember it was after a Christening, at which the aforesaid Welch Divine administered the Rites, the Ceremonies, as are indeed appointed by the Church in such cases, as your fair self cannot but know. It is to be found in the Rubric, and it followeth the Communion-service, and it is indeed a goodly ordinance, as is well known to you, fair Mistrefs

trefs Ann. As I was faying, I chanced to ob-  
 ferve upon the fober and decent demeanour,  
 with which our learned Paftor went through  
 the fervice; as indeed the whole was notably  
 well performed, faving that he had not the  
 gift of the Englifh fpeech fo glib as one might  
 . defire (our Gloucefterfhire Divines have the  
 beft fmack of it of any I know). This did I  
 remark, and the Goffips did fo titter and  
 laugh, and whifper, that indeed, la', I was  
 quite put to confufion; and then Miftrefs  
 \*Quickly tapped me on the cheek, and fought  
 of me, fair Ann, if fhe fhould ftand Godmother  
 to my firft child; and whifpered in my ear  
 (loud enough, forfooth, for all the company  
 to hear) that it was rumoured all over Wind-  
 for, that there was speedily to be a match be-  
 tween me and Miftrefs Ann Page——And I  
 bowed, and ftammered, and rejoined, that it  
 was a promife above my hopes—and then the  
 Goffips fell to tittering and whifpering incon-  
 tinently, that indeed la', I was quite abafh'd.

Fair Miftrefs Ann, it is not the fafhion of  
 Abram Slender to difparage any. There be  
 fome among thy fuitors, that have very good

\* This is not Mrs. Q. of Eaftcheap.

gifts

gifts and graces. Imprimis, or first of all, Mr. Fenton.—He hath a good leg and an indifferent breast, and is indeed a youth of good conditions—He danceth, singeth songs without book, and hath store of riddles and good nights, and is, in sooth, a very dog at fence—but he hath seen wild days, Mistress Ann, and wild nights—he hath consoorted with the loose, the idle, and the graceless—he hath kept more waffels, and spent more monies upon riotings and chamberings, I think on my conscience, than the mad merry fat knight himself. I will not say much of myself—it is not my way—but the learned Sir Hugh, and the wise Justice Shallow, who is also my cousin (by my mother's side—she came of the Shallows of Gloucestershire, and spelt her name with an *e*, *Shallowe*) these can vouch for me, that I am not given to drinkings, and expences, and wasting my patrimony—Folks did use to commend me therefore. I was call'd in mine own country, “Staid Abram,” sometimes “Sober Abram”; good commendations, as times go—good commendations, if rightly taken, fair Mistress Ann. I say again, I do not mean to disparage any—neither again will I run comparisons with the French Leach Caius —he

—he is suspected, yea shrewdly, fair Ann, of a plot—he is disaffected—shun him—he is thought to be a spy.—My Cousin Shallow hath also an eye upon him—I do repeat it, shun him.

For thy servant, it is not meet that he found his own praises—let his friends, who also put him upon this, answer for him. Thus much let me say, that I fall not short of any of thy suitors in rare gifts of body, mind, and fortune.—I am a very dog at stew'd \*prunes; and I have estates, and beeves, and a goodly mansion in Gloucestershire, when I come of age (nine months and odd days only, I do lack of coming to years of discretion) and I will settle upon thee, and thy heirs lawfully begotten, five hundred mark a year, if the thing might be brought to bear—I would it might, fair Mistress Ann! for folks would think it sin and shame, that the family of the Slenders should perish for lack of heirs. And I pray you, fair Ann, do not listen to the tales of the slanderous.—Jacob Perkins hath taken unto himself the shame and the sin of

\* For an explanation of this phrase, see Note in the 3d Scene of the 3d Act, first part of *Henry the 4th.*—Johnson's Edit. of Shakspeare.

the

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

the illegitimate base-born offspring laid to my charge, and the youth and the maiden are settled in a neighbouring Hamlet.

I do fend with these my servant Simple, an honest knave, and of good wit.

Farewell, sweet Ann!



SIR HUGH EVANS TO ANN PAGE.

I do peg and pefeech you, and I do make requests, moreover, and entreaties, look you, in the pehalf and pehoof of Master Apram Slender, in the goot town Windfor resident, that you would pestow your craces, and your smiles, and your favours, upon the poor youth.—He is a youth of coot gifts and promises, and it is the desire of your Father, and withal of the sage Justice Shallow, that you would look with an eye of pity and compassion upon him.—The case, look you, is a desperate case—the poor youth's knaggin is primful of fancies, and melancholies, and dependencies; that it would make any Christian heart plead to see.—I do fear me his wits are going; his judgements and his memories, observe, which we are apt to denominate and call

call his wits, or his faculties;—they are both approved words and phrases. He was 'ont be a youth of coot parts, and of creat learning; and now hath he forgot his moods, and his tenfes, and his Quæ-Genus withal. He did never fail give the answers and the reponfes, which are fet down in the Church Catechifm, freely and with creat readinefs, and without pook, look you; and now hath he no judgement in thefe things.—O'my confcience, he hath clean forgot his outward and his fifible figns and his craces, and is a fery Heathen in fuch matters, which is a fhame, and a fin, and a creat pity, moreover.—The pig fat Knight put him down the other day, when he required of him who was the ftrongeft man? —“By'r Lady” quoth Apram, “I cannot tell.” Thy memory is a thing of nought, rejoined the Knight.—Tell me, who lay in Dalila's lap, and had his poll claw'd, and lo! the enemy came upon him, and fhaved him with a razor of Gath?—and fo fell to mockings and vloutings; for he hath a foul uncodly tongue, and a fery Infidel wit, look you.—Py the Mafs, he will not fpare Cot's pook when it doth come in his way.—Coot Miftrefs Ann, I do counfel and exhort you to ufe the poor young  
man

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

man tenderly, or he may pe triven to desperations, and cholers, and lunacies—you have your 'visaments o'this matter—look to it—he is a well-conditioned youth, and a pold; and one, moreover, that hath Quarter-staff'd with a Warrener, and hath look'd a Pack-sword in the face upon occasions, marry.

As I can learn, he hath not proke the matter to you, that is to say, verpally and py 'ord of mouth; but he hath written, he tells me; and I hope in a Gentlemanly phraze, and that he hath offered coot offers and conditions, look you—for he cometh of gentle blood.——Coot Mistrefs Ann, give the youth lifts and encouragements, for he is packward and shy in these matters, and may need it, look you.——Indeed, the youth is a youth of coot parts, and creat motefty, and hath an indifferent skill in the languages, and may come to pe of the Quorum, observe; for his creat crandfather and father, and his crandfather old Simon Slender, have peen all of the Quorum before him; and it is not meet nor fitting, look you, that there should fail a man out of the House of the Slenders to judgement the land.

Farewell, coot Mistrefs Ann! H. EVANS.

ANCIENT



ANCIENT PISTOL TO MASTER ABRAM  
SLENDER.

LET Doves and Lambkins figh.—Must Pif-  
tol verses write?  
Down, princely choler, down!—Shall Man of  
War turn pimp?  
Then ballad-monging thrive — Pistol will  
nought indite.—  
Turn verse to prose for me—turn day to  
night——  
And Chaos judge thy rhymes—for prosody  
shall rue,  
False concords halt—pronoun and adverb  
limp—  
For parts of speech are none, when none can  
speech impart.  
Be Slender therefore mute, for slender is his  
wit.  
The fox shall cater for the silly Goose,  
And lordly Lion eke for base Jackall,  
E'er true love woo by proxy.  
Couragio, Lads! Mecænas is the word—  
Poets their patrons have, and Verses do en-  
sue.—  
Why then let purses gape, for Gratis is a Fool,  
And



OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

And golden wires make music.  
Shall Phoebus thread-bare go, the Muses nine  
also,

Those dainty Imps on top of high Parnasse,  
Shall they undowried weep? Then Spinster be  
the word—

Wedlock is nought—Pistol will fingle live.  
Pistol Pistoles doth love—like loveth like.  
Let purse-strings crack—Nan Page is thine,  
sweet boy.

She doth thee fly, but Cretan is her wing—  
The wax doth melt, when Pistol is the Sun,  
And thou shalt seal, go to—contented be  
therefore——

But let the labourer live, for he his wages  
earns.——

Pistol Pistoles doth lack, who lacketh nought  
of wit.

Nan Page is thine, and Fenton he shall flee;  
Yea, be exhaled, like damned dog of dunghill;  
For Pistol he hath spoke by Rowen' and her  
Chalice.

*Note.*—Master Slender appears to have been tampering with Pistol to write him some love-verses for Ann Page.——How he could suspect Mine Ancient of going to work without his accustomed implements, his *Aurum Durabile*, &c. I can only attribute to his very slight acquaintance with the Ancient.

COMBINATION

COMBINATION OF THE WINDSOR INN-  
KEEPERS.

SIR Knight, thy Clarion——Blow, Bully Rock! Blow, Robin Muns, Peter Pimple, and Arthur Swipes! To him of the cumbrous Womb the Recheat! Sir Knight, we greet thee.—Thy Fift of Chivalry, most radiant Dad of Bacchus! From Herne's Oak unto Datchet Mead do our lintels fwell to receive thee, most puissant Elve-queller!——Are our Husbands pamper'd, do Brows inflame and itch? Arise, Sir Knight, arise and woo—Quick! Trot! Jog!—Into the basket go, and dive into the deep—Descend, Mistrefs Pratt, descend, and to the Forest speed with Herne the Hunter's Horns—Purge wittolly Husbandhood of it's humours, and let Housewifery appear most chaste.——Thou art the pumice-stone of Philosophy in Windsor-quarry found;—our Dace and our Plaice, our Venison, and our Samson, our nether Socks, and our upper Shirts, our Wode-woman, and our Sack-master.——We have no Dragons, bully; we have no riddle-mongers to gobble up our unexpounders, no dainty Monster to breakfast on  
our

our Virginity, or thou should'st be our Harcles and our Champion too. Shall us lose thee, Bully? Shall us lend thee Horses? Thou art big, thou art fat, convex, rotund——Thou wilt break their backs——Spavins and navel-galls do slacken paces.——Thou art rein-swoln, pot-bellied—Diseases are catching, Knight—fracted wind is foul—Candy is not good with Horse flesh——Do we utter well, Bully? Speak we scholarly? We are confederate, join'd, Men of Compact—Thou shalt not straddle our Nags—they bear not double, old Castor and Pollux. To the Common go—ascend, Sir Galilean; mount, and to the City trot—We will strew the way—we will climb palms—Will it do, Bully? The As doth trample most Priestly—'twill be pompous, Greekish.

We, the Caputs, and the Heads of the merry Order of Hosthood in King Harry's Town Windsor resident, do protest, that the Knight Falstaff shall not have our, or any of our Horses.—Doth he tender Coin for hire? He hath mickle weight—he's a Mineral, a Fossil, a Mine of Lead—he will crush, overwhelm.—Do we ken his Angels, will he

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

he purchase? We have bowels, we have bowels—Naghood's Tongue doth utter not—it is ty'd—We will not fell—we are leagu'd.

Sign, seal, deliver—Quick, Neighbours!

Signed,

BULLY ROCK.

ROBIN MUNS.

PETER PIMPLE.

ARTHUR SWIPES.



SIR JOHN TO ANTIENT PISTOL.

HASTE, my good Antient, I would see thee—Haste to Mistrefs Quickly's—I have misused thee—I confess it, I confess it; but be thou the good Samaritan—I have need of oil to my wounds—I have been cozen'd, revil'd, and whipt—cozen'd by Woman, revil'd by Man, and whipt by Child.—I have been antler'd, my good Antient, though not wedded.—But I lie, I have been wedded too;—to a buck-basket, to the hot fingers of fairylves, to the frail promises of woman.—Yea, I have had the Spinster's ring—I was fous'd

fous'd into the Thames, and wrung by mine Host's scullions; cramp'd 'twixt hand and hand like a rinc'd doublet.—I had thought my swoln belly were but a mass of congealed sack, beverag'd, indeed, with a slight smack of distillation from the poppies of the drowsy God; but I was out, villainously mistaken—I had more bucket-water than sack: and for distillation, I'm a knave an there hath been a scruple of it in my whole system for a matter of eight and forty hours.—There is no rest in a cart—Mine Host, and his fry of In-keepers—all the lice of Egypt lye in their quarters!—did enter into confederacy to unhorse me.—I broke their backs, forsooth! 'Tis a lie.—The disciple Ananias leas'd not so largely—'tis a lie—But thou art at Windsor—thou must be advis'd of all this; for the ballad-finging knaves did deal out, circulate their protest—'twas a standing jest—thou must know it.—I will briefly then unfold to thee, mine Antient, how I escaped me away. I had note of a commodity of hides being carted for London,—buckler's for Hal's, I would say the *King's* service.—A curse on Hal! Would he were fellow-twin to the Giant, he with the vulture at his chitterlings!

——To

——To Windfor went I for a reconciliation; from Windfor came I for a Tanner's yard!——Mark me, good mine Antient:—Having note that there were hides going for London, I barter'd with the Carter, brib'd the Boor to decamp at midnight without coil, for the town was mad, would ha' kept me for sport, made a Sampson of me, had I conso'ted with Ox-hides by day.—In I got, unknowing of other passengers—there were myriads—by night they did roost—on the morrow I was envelop'd, a lump of corruption! a very dunghill, with all its suffocative smells!—The buck-basket was a mansion to it, a Court—would I had been there again! I'd submitted to be quoited into the river—I'd submitted to be stirr'd like a boiled cabbage—yea, by the cowl-staff.——I was fifty times in the mind to descend on the road, and trust to dame Fortune for the rest; but the rogue will'd it not—he had a jest in store!—for the goal I bargain'd, and for the goal I must on.—'Twas not in my ability to vault—'twas a precipice of five foot—I should ha' burst like a bladder, and with as much explosion too, for I had fasted.——The town did come in view, and I was in a cart, drove like dung for a fallow; a  
man

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

man of my rank and parts!—I was compell'd to creep between the horns of the teeming hides, and ensconce me beneath.—I was compell'd to forego the light of day, or would I have lived, mine Antient, to be shotten, like a tale of bricks, from the nether end of a cart into a Tanner's yard? I'd rather roll'd and been dash'd—I'd rather have lain till the day of resurrection in the paunches of fallow hounds.—Had I been diminutive, I must have into the pit—but I o'ershadow'd it—the tan-pit, for the foul favour'd whipshot had made it his mark.

Haste, good mine Antient, I have more to tell thee.—Mine Hostess did think I had risen from the dead—Would I had not been so much among the living!—But indeed I was much corrupted.—Let me see thee—Delay not.—

JOHN FALSTAFF.



SIR



SIR JOHN TO CORPORAL \*BARDOLPH.

WHY, thou damn'd Mulciberian Cyclops-beaming rascal—thou recreant servitor to recreant Hinds;—thou hast no more honourable aspiement in thee, than is in a tail-abbreviated Butcher's retainer.—Because the apostate Prince, the Eastcheap Iscariot, commended the boy Francis, thou must, forsooth, perpetually gibbet, gibbet, gibbet, up and down like mine Hostess's pybald turnspit.

One would think, the only particle of Promethean animation, thy carcase was dowered with, had concenter'd in thy perpetually verduring nasalities;—and yet have I seen thee trail a pike most puissantly.—Nay, 'twas thy gait, thy warlike deportment, procured

\* Perhaps the Reader should be reminded, that Bardolph had left Sir John's service on account of the Knight's increased expences, and engaged himself as Tapster to mine Host of the Garter.

"I sit at Ten pound a week."

FALSTAFF.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

Act I. Scene 3.

thee



thee a Halbert; superadded indeed to a subtilty of finger thou wert egregiously endowed with.

Haft thou forgotten, when some thirty years ago thou wert piously bawling out a rosary with good Mistrefs Blurt, at Paul's? Haft thou forgotten the theft of her holy beads? I saw it, and dubb'd thee an Officer upon the spot; and now are these good Gentlemanly acquirements shrunk to the service of a pewter-pot!——By the Spirit of Cacus, 'tis an apostacy more egregious than that of the betrayer Judas.—To see a fine, dull, indifferent, dispassionate, Pick-purse, forego his laudable, his honourable avocation, and commence waiting-varlet, 'mong the draff of society! 'Tis a breach, a perilous gap in the holy Command, which prescribes unto Man to be duteous and content in his ordained state of life.—I shall live to see thee damn'd, Bardolph.—In the name of a soldier, I conjure thee bestir thyself—Instant discharge me the Knave *Tapster*, and enlist me the tall Recruit *Ambition*.—Think not I would that thou should'st forswear ale——Drink, drink—an it's an angel a quart, I'll answer the brewage.

If

If thou conceit'st, that the deep Waffel is only to be kept in common houses, thou art villainously mistaken.—I was never a Tapster, and yet hath my blood kept a perpetual Coronation.—Sack, burnt sack, hath preserv'd me an illuminated front; but indeed 'twas ever an emblem of the Falstaff loyalty. My Grandfire, when he died, bequeath'd to his son's portion a swoln kidney. The young heir, a Roman of the true stamp, increas'd the family estate—it throve with him.—For myself, thou hast known me, Bardolph, thou hast known me.—I am not like a many of these now-a-day summer heirs, who prodigally lavish in civets the estates of their ancestors—No—I have religiously kept up the inheritance.—Prove that the fires of my liver have ever been extinct—Prove that they have, and scourge me with rods like the drowsy vestal.

In the most profound science of philosophy there is a term, Corporal, and it is much used, called an *Axiom*.——But I will not mispend the supererrogatory wind, with which the omnipotence of Candy hath kindly bless'd me withal, by entering into verbose definition,  
and

and perplexing thee with crude phrase——  
 No—I am too well acquainted with thy indiscriminate uncleanly appliances of papers.  
 ——I will briefly observe then, that it hath been ever esteemed a self-evident principle, that the sincerity of returning allegiance is better expressed by deeds than words.——I know not whether the Apostle Thomas had my belly; but this I know, I have his *unbelief*. Thou may’st have the faith and sufferance of Zopyrus—more, more—I deny it not——  
 But, Corporal, I’ll see thee damn’d ere I’ll trust to it, till thou hast given the irrefragable proof—My horses are under arrest—Mine Host hath them in durance for a credit of Ford’s—he that made a Yonker of the fat Knight, under the semblance of Master Brook—that dealt him angels in his pocket, and blows on his skin—that slighted him into a ditch for a tadpole, and hunted him through Windsor Forest for a buck—that——but the breath of man is not sufficiently competent to great revenge.——I did never wish to controul the south-west wind till now—I’d blister him, till the very beasts trembled at his din.——Bardolph, bring off my beasts, my horses—Steal—Enter Ford’s house—  
 there

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

there is a fouth door but ill-fortified; and let me see thee forty pound the weightier for thy tapstership. I fhall be in Eastcheap—Delay not the moments—Mine Antient Pistol doth await to greet thee by the fist.—I'll not bid thee *adieu*, but I'll bid thee *farewell*.—Nym faith, there is a stoop of excellent malt-liquor in tap here.

JOHN FALSTAFF.



SIR HUGH EVANS OF THE GOOT TOWN WIND-  
SOR, PRIEST, TO SIR JOHN FALSTAFF,  
GREETING.

SIR John, I emprace you fery affectionately—I fold you to my posom—marry, not iten-  
tically and literally, o'my conscience you are  
too pig; put py type and py token, as Mistress  
Ford is 'ont exprefs her affection, peradven-  
ture, in 'Indfor Forest. Ha! ha! ha!—Sir John,  
why you are creat upon your own elections  
andimmunities—Free Ranger in King Harry's  
Park, and Knight of the most respectable and  
goot Order of the Path; invested, marry, in  
Datchet Mead.—Ples my foul! why I did  
never know Christian rise to such preferments  
without

without the assistance of Majesty—save and except hur own countrymen, who have, indeed, been compell'd to crow creat of themselves since the days of Llewellyn\*. Why, if the opinion of some shrewd Philosophers be just and goot, which do afer, that the soul of man (and the pody is conjunctive† and inseparate) doth procreffively crow nearer to perfection, o'my conscience, you make such strides, you will be exalted above the heads of all the people very shortly; if by no other means, marry, at the callows for stifling some poor 'oman to death with that monstrous feather-ped in your pelly. Ha! ha! ha! You see, Sir John, we of the Rubrick can be very merry, maugre a plack coat and doublet; put you must pear with a little—(Pless my soul, what is the 'ord? Galen hath it—) aye, 'tis a *Retort*—you must pear with a little retort, for the mockery and gybe you did put upon me 'fore Master Ford, and his goot friends.

Put all this is not my present pusiness.—  
There is a man, Sir John, marry, one Pan-

\* The last King of Wales.

† Sir Hugh, Sir Hugh, thou art schismatick, Sir Hugh.

dolph,

dolph, or *Pardolph*, for inteed he hath not, Got help, the appearance of a Pope's Legate—a sleepy, heavy-look'd man, with lifid knots on his nose and cheeks—you must recollection the man—he lives with mine Host of the Garter, and traws ale and peer in a greasy old red coat.—Well, peing very illiterate and padly prought up, the more the pity! he hath fery properly, look'e, made motions to me, as his Pastor, to frame something goot by way of answer to a tender made him.—Got pless my heart and soul, why you are 'orse than the Arch-Tevil in Paradise!—You tempt man and 'oman both.—Look'e, Sir John, the intention may pe goot; put I must pe pold to declare, the man peareth himself with greater order and principle, o'my conscience, than there is reason to pelieve, and credit of him, aforetime—Inteed, he is a little pit given to trowfiness; put then he doth not pilfer, and do dirty actions, as Abraham Slender, Esquire, Got's Lords! a creat Magistrate o' the County o' Gloucester, can fouch.—I do afer, Sir John, the man is petter pe a door-keeper in the House of the Lord, than a creat one in the tents o' the ungodly—so, take your 'visaments in this.—He 'ould altogether remain

remain with mine Host, who doth plead him, and physick him, and inteed 'ork with as much discretions on his face to render somewhat like the image of a man; though more the misfortune, without effect.—Peradventure, he may have some private hankerings after a prother soldier—'tis to pe expected—Got's Lords! Thirty years is a long shot to follow the Trum;—put I do pefeech, and desire of you, that he pe not enticed nor spirited away; for, o' my conscience, the man hath put little prain to help himself.—Pefeech you, Sir John, looke', as a shrewd turn.

I shall pe glad to pe advis'd of your emparkation to pull down the French King.—Got fend his Majesty 'ould make his peace with Glendower—He's a prave man, and 'ould atchiefe 'onders—O' my life, you'll do nought without him.—Ah you have admittances to his Majesty, make a prief o' the matter, and report it—he may pe soon found—depend, he's only among the plack mountains.

Marry, Sir John, there is one matter pefide.—You did porrow at my house a silver toaster.—Mine Host of the Garter hath it not.—Pefeech

—Pefeech you, look among your fervice of plate, and let me have it—'tis a weicht o' fourteen ounce—Mine Hofst did merrily fay your plate was all carried off on your pack. Ha! ha! ha! Pe you a pedlar, Sir John, or was it a vlout, and a freak of the fcald knave's? O' my confcience, one 'ould think you had enough to do to pear away your own powels; more efpecially after the merry compination o' the Inn-keepers. Pefeech you, Sir John, look among your fervice for my toafter.—I have a prefent of Seefe from Monmouth.

Well! Got's comfort go with you!—his Angels piddle down pleffings on your knaggin!

HUGH EVANS.



SIR JOHN TO CORPORAL BARDOLPH.

BARDOLPH, thou wilt make me call on Heaven to take me to itfelf—I fhall regret having furvived to witnefs the degeneracy of Gentlemen, my good friends.—I know not whether Dame Fortune will have it fo for fome differvice I have done her, but my late paffages in life have been villainoufly way-ward



ward——Pistol hath play'd me the light heel—Nym hath revolted—thou art a truant.——Mine Antient, and Nym, indeed, unable to procure forage without me, have come to confession and received absolution; and thou dost only withstand the affectionate tenders and remonstrances of thy old Master.——Bardolph, have I wrong'd thee at any time? Have I not made mine own necessities crouch to thy wants? Nay, have I not, many a time and oft, advanced thee monies when mine whole company were fain, out of very poverty, quarter upon the country? Thrice have I rescued thy legs from the Stocks.—When have I withheld my linen, when thy body had else rotted in bed? But that I saved thee, thou had once been flogg'd from Hamlet to Hamlet, been skinn'd for a fox, for pullet-stealing.——What matters it, that thou wert employed by me? Thy duty and fidelity to thy Master would gain thee laud at the latter day, I grant ye; but would it have pour'd in oil to thy wounds here?

I had thought of retiring from the world, like a good white-headed old man, furrounded by every my antient and approved good domestics

meftics.—I had thought of devoting a portion of my future days of ftrength to the fubduing of my juvenile paffions—I was loth to put it off too long; for know, Bardolph, there is a certain point in the age of Man, when the Delights of the Flefh do wax palsied in their government.—I mean not, that the accumulation of a fpecifick number of years muft of neceffity blunt the powers—No.—God forbid, that threefcore fhould be unprocreative!—Indeed, I am more than that myfelf—No.—There is a period, I fay, which is more diftant or early, according to the ftrength of the fortrefs, when our ally, Dame Nature, caufeth the foe to withdraw, and faveth us the merit of a felf-conqueft.

Haft thou never obferv'd, good Corporal, (now can I not call thee by any other name) haft thou never obferv'd in Eaftcheap a fpare acrimonious-looking Cannibal, feeding on his brethren, I would mean on roaft crabs? Haft thou never obferv'd the dewlap'd Elder, with finger trembling on the chords of old-age, apply beftriding glaffes to his well-contrived nofe, and view the figures on mine Hoftefs's tapeftry? His ocular powers have grown dim  
by

by age—in vain doth he look out for the soft colourings that once pleas'd him—his eye can discern nought but the ordinary shades—his film, his film does it.—Just so fares it with this goodly landscape of the world—The Yonker admires it's softer colourings, it's pleasures; and by habit is too prone to retain a smack for them, till the last hour of actual enjoyment passeth away; till the blood, it's uncheck'd spirit flagg'd in reaching the imaginary goal, courseth along like a staid mule. This state of incompetent imbecility would I provide against—I would have the merit of a forestall'd repentance.

There is a thing, Corporal, mentioned in Holy Writ, and it is known to many in our land by the name of mushroom—*Manna*, I would say; but indeed, 'tis the same thing.—This Manna, as Moses doth assert in his Reports upon adjudged Cases, fell as the dew of Heaven upon an hungry people. Now, if they had possessed no teeth, good Corporal, God's Elect had been lost, and the Manna remained unmafticate at this day.

Such another windfall is Penitence, unprofitable to him who findeth it too late.

For

For this cause had I thought of retiring timely with my good domestics and retainers about me.—Thyself, Nym, Pistol, my faithful dogs, Mistress Dol, with thy own Helen, good Corporal, all, all should embrace the blessed moment of Regeneration.—For this did I desire thee to bring off my horses.—Is it for me, Corporal, to abandon my gentle, my good cattle, to the mercy of the ungodly, to the thong of a mundanely-minded hunter, an Inn-keeper? I thank my God, I have not yet the bowels of a Turk.

Mine Antient, who bears these, will inform thee more fully.—Advise with him, and remember, Bardolph, if thou still adherest to thy damnable heresy, Sir John is no longer thy friend.

Farewell!



ANTIENT

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.



ANTIEN PISTOL TO SIR JOHN  
FALSTAFF.

LET sack abound!—Be merry, Goodman Buff—for Bardolph, foul-engender'd Wight, the Mule of stubborn rein, doth yield to Knighthood's proffers.—Sir John shall have the stud—avaunt the stud of mushroom growth, the Bardolph's nasal stud! I mean the Bully Rock's—Bucephalus, and Alexandrine nags! Sir John shall steed again—Pistol hath said it.—Shall deeds proclaim, how Garter'd Hofts, and Brazen Bulls were charm'd? Or will old Æson list, ere Jason doth bring home the Golden Fleece? I will unfold, for since that Quorum-oneyers\* yearn to sack, Pauca's a tatler grown.

When Pistol kenn'd the Lazar, he of spigot-puissance, off-shogg'd the scouler like to Dutchman's pinnace.—And did not ancestry o'ertake? Yea, and subdue; or Pistol's Caliber is not of England's mould.

Sir John, and master mine, thou art the

\* Antient Pistol must allude to the mirth of Master Silence in his cups.—Vide Henry IVth. Second Part.  
kernel

kernel and the core of Clerkish Knighthood.  
 ——The Apple of mine Eye is base—Foh! a  
 Figo for the phrase!——Let paucity be Nym's  
 —Pistol is quaint of quip.—Thou art the Tree  
 on Ida's top, whence golden apples grow to  
 tempt the maw of man.——Bardolph will  
 pluck, go to.——Thy schoolish letter, Knight,  
 hath from the lees of ale incorporate distill'd  
 unmanly tear; at scan of it, the bashful Cor-  
 poral did weep like she of Thebes.—His  
 senses are most sap—he hath been brew'd,  
 and wort's his age—Doth the humour pass?  
 ——He is a child, go to—and from his  
 fwaddling-clothes will Pistol shape the doub-  
 let, slops, and eke the short cloak hight, for  
 Knighthood's wear.——Shall Dombledons  
 and silk-worms vile lay dead in Sepulchre, and  
 shall not man be cloath'd? Why then let Ford  
 be spun.—He shall be robb'd; for warriors  
 must have Mark in body and in breech.——  
 Clip we the Bardolph's snuff, when services  
 are done? Or do we fuel add, for he is to the  
 socket burnt?—In filching time his eyelids do  
 bow down, and pawn'd he hath to weaver's  
 man most base, his goodly Caliver, for hose of  
 second wear.—He must be sherke'd, or charges  
 will ensue.—Come we to the *pauca one*, or  
 shall

shall the Phoenix blaze? We must adopt, or Dian will become maid Marian to Lucifer, and lead his mowing Imps, his damned Apes of Hell.—We must succession have; for lads and compeers, wooers of the Moon, should never dwindle fellowship—Pistol will Jackall be unto the crew.—Sir John, and Lion mine, arrest thine eyes' epistolary progress, and mark the Calf—I mean the crural Calf.—Seest thou ought unsymmetried? Now, by the Lad that Vulcan, he of antler'd brow, did catch like Sparrow, his foul is as well appor-tion'd.—Palm him the Nief of mickle Fellowship, and from the tiding-bearer low bid boyhood rise the puissant Pick-purse.—Ought, that Pistol hath not utter'd, he will unfold.—Bow down umbrageous Manhood, and perpend unto him.

Thine ANTIENT PISTOL.

Ford shall be robb'd — Bardolph is Tapster to him, and doth his threshold know.—Thy Nags shall forage in Eastcheap ere bats do sleep again.—Farewell!

DAVY



## DAVY TO SHALLOW.

I BESEECH your good Worship to come quick. Here is Master Abram very ill—He goes about, and about, and lobs his head over this shoulder, and over that shoulder, like, your Worship, as it were, just of all the world like the large sun-flower of an afternoon by the tulip borders.——I'm afraid, and so's Robin, that he's bestraught; for he sighs, and flobbers his beard, and Robin says, a' sometimes looks, marry, just as your Worship did, when your Worship went mad about the Coat of Arms at old Sir Thomas's death.——He went on the Bench with your Worship's Cousin Silence\* to commit some vagrants, for stealing the nettles out of the ditch in the Park to make broth, thereby hurting the fences; and he took no note of any thing, but look'd down upon the ground, and sigh'd, and sigh'd—and presently, when your Worship's Cousin Silence ordered I should make out a mittimus for one Alice Page, a' cried out, *Mum!* and said, she was in white—and

\* Query.——Was not this same Master Silence a descendant of the Roman *Tacitus*?

she



she was an old gypsey, your Worship, in drab; and so I told Master Abram, but he call'd me a *Post-boy*.—I beseech your Worship to come quick, for a' heeds nobody.—Master Abram was wont speak very soft, and play ball with the maids, and sing to us in the Hall; and now a' goes about, and pines, and pines, and eats no not the tithe of a gooseberry.—I got him a dish of prunes, stew'd prunes, your Worship, that a' was wont to delight in; and a' touch'd them not; but said, *Mr. Fentum, Mr. Fentum* must have 'em.—But I told him there was no such a Gentleman in Cotswold; then a' call'd out, "*Nan Page was a maid*;" and so fell a gobbling them up with his hands, both his hands, that, your Worship, 'twas quite unlike Master Abram, that was always so bashful to eat afore any body at all.—I beg your Worship to hasten, or a' may come to a bad end.—A' went out at twelve o'clock last night, and said the fat Knight Falstaff, he that robb'd your Worship's Park, was under the Elms—Robin and I took our Calivers to shoot him, remembering your Worship's directions; but a' was not there—all was lonely, your Worship, and yet Master Abram would not come in.—A' said,

"Nan

“Nan Page would appear in white,” and then a call’d out, *Mum! Mum!*

Good your Worship, I’ll be bold to observe upon a point:—A matter has struck me, as your Worship was wont to say—marry, and very hard.—I hope he be not, that is, I think a’ would not, your Worship conceits me, I should grieve that—that our Master Abram were in league with—— Truly, I have serv’d your Worship very faithfully a matter of twelve years, as serving-man, and steward, and butler, and—— I have but fix mark a year, your Worship——and clerk, and keeper of the stocks, and—all for fix mark, your Worship——and cook, and cook’s man, and—hatch’d your Worship’s young turkies, worn all your Worship’s cast doublets and hose—— it’s a long charge for one lone man, and fix mark’s a short reckoning, and I hope, your Worship would make a friend of me in any great matter——An Master Abram be one on ’em, he may have great reason for it—and I’ll be suppos’d he is; for a’ walks back and back quite in thought, and speaks to himself, and then answers, and does all just as Percy the Duke’s son did, afore he was kill’d——

Your

Your Worship may trust a worse man than me, and trust a friend—Master Abram\* may stand in Percy's shoes, and yet wear them out, I can tell your Worship that.—There's much wool in Cotswould, altho' little cry.—The Stroud's a small shot over; but a bullet won't find the bottom soon.—Would your Worship have the bucklers and mails clean'd up, that hang in the Hall? Marry, and the Welch hooks new pointed? Glendower will teach us trail the hook.—I would, your Worship would come among us.—Here's William Visor, and Ralph Rampant, and Phil. Snugges, and Mark Maple-eye, and a many more of us—we exercise, your Worship, every day; and I deal out provisions and ale from your Worship's cellar—and I would, your Worship would give order for pay; and some hops, your Worship, for brewing; and some hurdles for the turnip-field; and a new

\* Who could suspect ABRAHAM SLENDER, ESQ. of taking part in National Commotions? Davy's conceit is certainly a little mirthful.—Yet it should be remarked, that the wild and irregular starts of Percy may have been the subject of much talk with the common people, and by such shrewd fellows as Davy be considered the distinguishing mark, or (as Falstaff says) the *Shibboleth* of a Rebel of Rank.

yoke

yoke for the oxen; and a word of comfort for Alice Shortcake;—she pines, your Worship, about Master Abram.

With these matters I humbly take leave of your Worship.



SHALLOW TO DAVY.

God blefs my heart and foul!—Disband the foldiers, Davy.—Let 'em be disbanded.—Blefs my heart, I shall be attainted of affection to his Majesty's enemies.—That Mark Maple-eye hath more colours than one—I have seen him a good subject.—Marry, doth my Cousin Silence know, is he advised of the matter?—Let him not know it, Davy.—How long hath Ralph Rampant been a rebel? Marry, he shall remain Rampant—he shall be quarter'd for their arms, hung, drawn, and quarter'd.—Let my Cousin Slender be tended, Davy, closely, Davy—a crook in love should be in the hand of a good shepherd—He hath been cross'd, Davy.—A fair sprag maiden of good conditions and endowments, but come of the first woman, yea more fig-leaves

leaves to conceal her tendencies than Eve, Davy—marry, a *Budget*\*. Let John Coomb widen the stocks—Hath he sent his bill, Davy? Let my Cousin Silence have it for the Quorum.—The County must pay it—'tis a repair awarded for damages, damages by the rebels—in their retreat, Davy.—A new granary, and a dove-cot, indeed, on my own lands, but that is nought, not awhit.—Marry, we examine—we cast, and pay.—Truly, an a Justice of the Peace could not shift to edge any little tiny matter in of his own, the Quorum would not hold plural—'twould quick be in the singular number, Davy, soon *Qui, quæ, quod*.—Ha! ha! ha!—We don't labour in the vineyard for nought, Davy—Ha! ha! ha! Marry, let the Stocks be widened—Bid John Coomb look to it, and see that it be done.—I'm resolv'd, that William Visor shall not 'scape—his legs shall not bear him off again—he hath a gross calf; but the Stocks shall bind it—he shall not get away—yea, he

\* Whether Shallow is intentionally witty, I cannot pretend to affirm; but this same word was to have been sweet Ann Page's private answer to Master Slender's Quail-call in Windsor Forest.—Vide *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act V. Scene 1.

shall

shall be bound in calf.—God blefs my foul, Davy, how could you affemble; how encourage, marry, and marshal, the foes of his gracious Majesty?—O' my confcience, I might have been proclaim'd, yea, marry, declared a rebel by attainder, and march'd againft.—

But indeed you have not been in love, Davy—You never lov'd.—My Coufin Slender hath a great trial—look to him, Davy—he hath much—Give him attendance, Davy—he may ftart, marry, and break out, and—'tis love, Davy, look to him, a liege fubject, and a loyal, may do it.—I could name you the day, when the hear of a fine tall Bona-Roba would make me, I fhould ha' hop'd you——

\*God blefs my heart, why what, Davy—it is not all brew'd—hath become of the Pocket from Hinchley market—the Pocket of Hops, new hops, Davy, bought at the Wake, marry, of Hugh Ryecrop?——You can't chufe want

\* Here is an air of pleafantry throughout, that I have never obferved in Shallow before. Through all his affected anger, 'tis eafy enough to difcover, that his vanity is not a little fed by Davy's anticipating officioufnefs.—No matter to Robert in what caufe they had affembled, he had a corps of foldiers training in his fervice!

hops,

hops, Davy—certain you can't.——Marry for the yoke, let it be had; but the hurdles, Davy, must be stak'd and bound—You don't give range, you don't give scope, Davy, to the flock.—Let them have an half acre turnip—they'll not level fences.——Look to my Cousin Slender.—I shall tend him myself, Davy, soon, Davy.

ROBERT SHALLOW.



DAVY TO SHALLOW.

MASTER Abram is dead, gone, your Worship—dead! Master Abram! Oh! good your Worship, a's gone.——A never throve, since a' came from Windfor—'twas his death. I call'd him a rebel, your Worship—but a' was all subject—a' was subject to any babe, as much as a King—a' turn'd, like as it were the latter end of a lover's lute—a' was all peace and resignation—a' took delight in nothing but his book of songs and sonnets—a' would go to the Stroud side under the large beech tree, and sing, till 'twas quite pity of our lives to mark him; for his chin grew as long as a muscle—Oh! a' sung his soul and body quite away

away—a' was lank as any greyhound, and had such a scent! I hid his love-songs among your Worship's law-books; for I thought, if a' could not get at them, it might be to his quiet; but a snuff'd 'em out in a moment.—Good your Worship, have the wise woman of Brentford secured—Master Abram may have been conjured—Peter Simple says, a' never look'd up, after a sent to the wise woman—Marry, a' was always given to look down afore his elders; a' might do it, a' was given to it—your Worship knows it; but then 'twas peak and pert with him—a' was a man again, marry, in the turn of his heel.—A' died, your Worship, just about one, at the crow of the cock.—I thought how it was with him; for a talk'd as quick, aye, marry, as glib as your Worship; and a' smiled, and look'd at his own nose, and call'd "Sweet Ann Page." I ask'd him if a' would eat—so a' bad us commend him to his Cousin Robert (a' never call'd your Worship so before) and bade us get hot meat, for a' would not say nay to Ann again\*.—But a' never liv'd to touch it—a' began all in a mo-

\* Vide Merry Wives of Windsor—Latter part of the 1st Scene, 1st Act.

ment



ment to sing "Lovers all, a Madrigal." 'Twas the only song Master Abram ever learnt out of book, and clean by heart, your Worship—and so a' sung, and smiled, and look'd askew at his own nose, and sung, and sung on, till his breath waxed shorter, and shorter, and shorter, and a' fell into a struggle and died. I beseech your Worship to think he was well tended—I look'd to him, your Worship, late and soon, and crept at his heel all day long, as it had been any fallow dog—but I thought a' could never live, for a' did so sing, and then a' never drank with it—I knew 'twas a bad sign—yea, a' sung, your Worship, marry, without drinking a drop.

Alice Shortcake craves, she may make his shroud.—Ah! had your Worship but never ha' taken him to Windsor! I knew Mistress Alice's mind, marry, and Master Abram's too—they'd ha' coupled, your Worship, and never dreamt of love, any more than all their forefathers, and grandfathers did afore them.

Old Sir Simon's vault must be opened, I humbly conceit, your Worship; and Master Abram's effigy placed by his side in the Chancelry,

celry, in armour, marry, with his hands folded on his breast, by way of denoting his death's-wound! for I humbly think, with your Worship's leave, it may tend to warn all such, as have not shrewd heads, from entering into love-matters.—An your Worship will specify time and place, I'll bring the horses to meet, and carry your Worship home, in order to have directions about Master Abram's funeral.

Your Worship's serving man,

DAVY.



*The following fragment appears among Sir John's papers.—It evidently formed part of a Letter to the Prince; but being very mutilated, the Editor was for some time irresolute as to granting it admission among his more perfect MS.—However, an innate reverence to every the most trifling relique of the good Knight, at length determined him to present it to the publick.*

\* \* \* \* made up of the shreds and clippings of the several arts and sciences.—

He

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

He hath made much progress in Italian, doth begin to wax villainously nasal in his pronunciation of French; and for dancing, Hal! he would flit ye to and fro like a shadow. \*

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* In height he is about 5 foot 11, or by'r lady, inclining to six foot; but the face, the face, is the Trumpeter to this aspiring inclination of Master Slender's; the distance from chin to brow being a common pace, or geometrically speaking, is to the whole upright system as 4 to 16½—one-fourth, if we omit fractions. With all this majesty of \*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Cæt. Desunt.*



CAPTAIN FLUELLIN TO MRS. QUICKLY.

Got plefs my heart! Captain Falstaff dead! Mistrefs 'Ickly, I hope he departed with the fear of his Majesty in poth his eyes, marry, and of Got too? His Majesty, to pe sure, was repukings and gallings to him, when his Majesty, look'e, was King upon the death of his father;

father; but that is nought——If he used his  
 goot pleasures in the matter, look'e, Mistrefs  
 'Ickly, he might degrade, and create a trum-  
 mer, or a fiser, or what is 'orse, the futler's  
 paggage-pearer o' the camp, of me, or of any  
 captain. Sir John was old, most certain, and  
 his preed might pe a matter pigger than I can  
 recollection to have seen; put that, look'e,  
 should not kill him a whit the more fudden.  
 ——'hy, I did have letters from him—when  
 was the messenger arrive? Aye, yesterday is  
 the week, 'tis in my pocket, advising of a kind  
 of intention, marry, to empark for the enemy's  
 coast with me and Captain Gower—'tis as  
 gypish and jokish, and as primful of the alto-  
 gether Knight, o' my conscience, as one  
 graff'd pippin might favour of another.——  
 Put Death is fery ill and moody in his 'havi-  
 our and manners.——He is not the Gentle-  
 man, peradventure, in his intercourses, that  
 I might observe of other his relatifes.——  
 There was Ulysses the Greek had occasions  
 and matters to discuss with Pluto—'hy, he  
 was received, look'e, pelow, as his rank  
 merited—O, Death had a goot pattern in  
 Pluto!—I have had readings apout Death—  
 You shall hear——

*And*

OF SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

*And when he 'ould pe merry, he doth chuse  
The gaudy champer of a dying King——  
O! then he doth ope wide his poney chaws.  
And with rude laughter and fantastic tricks,  
He claps his rattling fingers to his side;  
And when this solemn mockery——*

Put I will end with this solemn mockery.  
—You see, Mistrefs 'Ickly, that Death hath  
his vlouts, and his freaks, and his merriments,  
maugre what all the antient writers may  
afer; tho', o' my conscience, I cannot say, I  
did ever in any my pattles and skirmishes see  
him, look'e, so much as on a proad grin.——  
I am forget the lineage and family of the  
author; put it pe *Irish*.

Hath Captain Falstaff left any creat-mat-  
ters in the way of estate? Put that's no mat-  
ter at all—send me the pill of his funeral  
charges, and I will pe three crowns in his debt  
to puy him a pound of lead to lay in.——So  
Got me 'udge, I affection'd the man, as a  
man, peradventure, might estimate of a  
prother, where there was only one in the  
family, look'e, pefide the father and his own-  
self.——He was the fery person of all the  
'orld

ORIGINAL LETTERS, ETC.

'orld to keep th' universal army in goot glee, when the athversary, o' my conscience, approach'd with his pike as far off as the jerk of half a stone.—Hath he left sons and daughters to represent and typify him in the 'orld? Let me pe advised o' this matter, Mistrefs 'Ickly.—I will promotion and make them as pig men under King Harry, as he that peget them of 'oman; that is, Mistrefs 'Ickly, upon the well fouchment, and pelief, and credit too, that they pe honest and goot subjects, and pe not given to porrowings and sackings.—O' my credit, there is three pounds Sir John did get advance of me py way of possfets, which is no petter than dross —Put that, look'e, is a matter of affapility petween us, that I 'ould not discufs to an own prother.—He is dead, and I am three crowns in his debt, and there's the finish.

Got blefs you, Mistrefs Quickly!



FINIS.





*In the month of November, nineteen twenty-four,  
there were printed for Harper & Brothers  
by the Pynson Printers of New York  
seven hundred and twenty copies of this book,  
of which seven hundred are for sale,  
this copy being number 272*















